The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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A CAMPAIGN FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE?

AMONG the most prominent and powerful opponents of the Roosevelt administration are many Catholics, some of whom are leaders of the Democratic party, uniting now with Republican leaders in attacking the Roosevelt policies because they believe that in the main, and fundamentally, those policies are directly or indirectly subverting the established American system of personal liberty and the rights of private property, and seeking to set up a socialistic or communistic state tyranny in this country.

At the same time, there are many other Catholic citizens, belonging to both the major political parties, who support most, if not all, of the principal policies of the Roosevelt administration, because they believe that these policies do not lead toward any form of state Socialism or Communism, but, on the contrary, are intended, and in reality do tend, to reform the existing capitalistic system so that it may function more safely and securely than in the past to preserve and protect both personal liberty and private property. Such Catholics believe that these reforms are justified, not only by the need to rescue the people from the appalling results of the economic crisis, but also by the positive teachings of the Church, as laid down by Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI.

This view, however, is strongly opposed by the Catholics of the first-mentioned group. At least, it is opposed by some of them, who have themselves studied the papal encyclicals; for among many other Catholics who oppose the New Deal are large numbers who pay little attention to the papal teachings on social justice. In short, there prevails today a profound conflict among those American Catholics who differ concerning the practical application of the Church's teachings on social justice, while the rest of the Catholic body, probably the great majority, are sadly confused by this evident disagreement.

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In considering this deplorable situation, we are not chiefly concerned with its relation to the New Deal. We have used that relation simply to illustrate our main point with an obvious instance of the existing state of deep-seated disagreement among Catholics—plus a tremendous mass of indifference and ignorance—concerning the subject of social justice as that subject is taught by the highest possible moral authority in the Church. For whether the New Deal is swept away or perpetuated by the coming elections, the problem of social justice will remain as the most pressing, the most important, subject of our troubled age.

It is for this reason that we gladly hail the announcement by the Most Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara, chairman of the Department of Social Action of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, calling upon all American Catholics to unite in the commemoration of two of the Church's greatest pronouncements on social justice, on May 15, which date will be the forty-fifth anniversary of Leo XIII's encyclical, "Rerum Novarum," and the fifth of Pius XI's encyclical, "Quadragesimo Anno."

"The double anniversary," says Bishop O'Hara, "impels our gratitude. These encyclicals have come from the highest moral authority on earth, an authority endowed with the Divine Commission to teach all mankind. They are the world's outstanding pronouncements on the cause, nature and cure of the economic evils which beset modern man; and grievous as those evils still are, the words of the Pontiffs have exercised a most profound influence upon society.

"These world letters reject the old individualism of unrestrained competition. They reject the newer era of a vast and cruel private domination held by wealth, investment-control and credit. They tell us to retain private ownership but to make it the normal portion of the average man and rigorously subject it to the common good. They insist that wages, salaries, prices and all income from property shall be in an order of social justice at levels which will give every family and the whole community the secure material means of a good life. They tell employer and employee their obligations of individual and collective honesty and industry, of justice and social justice and of charity toward each other in the bonds of a common undertaking as children of God.

"To these ends they favor the people organizing into employers' associations, labor unions, farmers' organizations, and organizations of every occupation that all may work together, in the occupational groups of each industry, of agriculture and of the professions, and of all jointly to direct work, ownership, income and prices toward a full output and a fair distribution for all concerned.

"For the sake of social justice, economic peace and a right functioning of government itself, they call upon public authority to foster and assist this thoroughgoing and organized economic self-control. They proclaim that it is the duty of public authority to see that laws and institutions shall promote general prosperity, establish justice, protect the weak and the poor and advance that common welfare which social justice demands. They plead for a like world action in behalf of all mankind. These encyclicals summon us to possess in our souls the habitual sense of our common brotherhood in God the Father and in Christ the Son and, expressing our solidarity in economic organization and in government, to create a country and a world which will help and not hinder the march toward civilization and the march of every soul toward eternal happiness."

The Bishop goes on to call for a nation-wide effort on the part of American Catholics "to show our gratitude and become further steeped in the principles and spirit of the papal teachings on social justice. Sermons, public meetings, meetings of Catholic lay organizations, college, high school and grade school programs, are suggested, together with articles in the press, both Catholic and secular, radio addresses, and wide distribution of the encyclical letters and of commentaries upon and explanations of their teachings.

There should be a wide, and deep, and sustained effort to realize Bishop O'Hara's splendid program. Only by real, earnest study and discussion of the encyclicals, carried on not in a spirit of political or class partizanship, but in the spirit of Catholic loyalty to the Church of Christ, may the present unhappy and even scandalous dissensions and misunderstandings and ignorance among Catholics on the burning question of social justice be overcome, and the benefits of the papal teachings be made really available for ourselves and our neighbors.

Week by Week

THOSE who believe that the destruction of wealth automatically creates wealth held that, despite vast public and private losses, the stimulus to production given by the flood disaster would prove helpful to the "forces making for business and employment recovery." Others saw only further impoverishment of once moderately wealthy groups. However all this may be, there was pretty general agreement that the employment creating machinery of the government was due for a fairly drastic overhauling. It was indicated that before Congress would grant the sums needed to underwrite Mr. Hopkins's plan for still an-

The Trend of Events

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other year, some clearer picture of what the spending had accomplished would be demanded. The slow progress of relief projects in many sections was being criticized, citizens alleging that as now functioning the WPA was reminiscent of the World War army at its worst. Elsewhere it was felt that the present system of relief employment was making it profitable for many not to seek work in industry. That much of what has been done is intelligible only as a temporary social welfare action appeared to be the normal opinion; and the query was whether the time had not come to call a halt. A final criticism—and possibly this is the most important point so far raised—concerned the cost and utility of several vast public works the completion of which would demand huge sums over a period of years. Ought some of these, like the Florida canal, to be abandoned? All these things concern serious and crucial problems of administration.

The Essence of Dictatorship

HERR HITLER has once again demonstrated the "solidarity" of the German people. This time the claim is made that 98.7 percent of all voters endorsed the way things are going in the Third Reich. But there is no longer any value in studying such manifestoes of dictatorship. It is the phenomenon of dictatorship itself that becomes increasingly important. We note that Mark Sullivan said the other day that "Italy, Russia and Germany are merely three expressions of the same thing." There are differences, yes, but these are unimportant. "The sum of what they have in common is the negation of democracy. The question before America is whether its democratic conception of government and society can be saved from infection by the newer European conception." These remarks are interesting because they are in part true. Against them one may aver that none of the three governments named has ever been "democratic" in our sense, and yet very few ever believed that the example of the czar would "infect" the United States or that the House of Savoy was emitting propaganda fumes which might ultimately land a monarch in the White House. The reason why dictatorship is a bad influence goes deeper than the war upon democracy, though for Mr. Sullivan the word has overtones which may in a measure wrestle with the problem. Our Russian, German and Italian autocrats are expressions of a widespread, quasi-religious belief in salvation through force. That belief was born into the world at a time when the liberalistic creed which underlies Mr. Sullivan's "democracy" was approaching its triumph. It insisted that nature left to itself would not produce the best possible world, but that the conscious use of planned violence would turn revolutionary energies in the right direction.

A READER of history constantly marvels at the lucidity with which these positions were recognized and stated more than a hundred years ago, and intellectuals were debating about them until well-nigh the middle of the nineteenth century. We have recently issued in this magazine a piece by Heine, a liberal whose aversion to the doctrine of totalitarianism led him to foresee its results. Perhaps "democracy" was at bottom the product of confidence that humanity as a whole is good, while "autocracy" in its contemporary forms is a consequence of reasoning that only a group, a nation or a class is good. During the nineteenth century, orthodox Christianity was busy protesting against the non-religious implications of liberalism, as witness for example the Syllabus issued during the pontificate of Pius IX. And it is apparent that the struggle of the Christian faith during these and coming years will be against states embodying Nietzschean or Marxist conceptions of force. That these last are allied, though Nietzsche is incomparably the greater foe, is now perfectly obvious. The war against them is difficult because while liberalism was secularistic, it at least stressed common human values to which Christianity itself clung tenaciously. Such is the situation prevailing, and to it America certainly cannot remain indifferent.

Science and Life

APPARENTLY a Harvard scientist, Dr. Gregory Pincus, has discovered that it is possible to fertilize a rabbit egg artificially, thus in theory eliminating one of the sexes. His experiments are to be listed among very many which have shown that organic processes are at bottom chemical or physical. The vitalists, to be sure, maintain their advantage in that life itself has not yet been created in a test tube. But the chances that it may be so produced are by no means negligible, and it is well to keep in mind that the philosophical effect might be very great. During recent decades a number of philosophical institutes have so thoroughly conjoined vitalism and creationism that the impression has been widely given that the first is a "must" in orthodox Christian, particularly in Catholic, belief. It should not be necessary to declare that this impression is incorrect. Older doctors and philosophers in the Church were assuredly not vitalists, holding as they did almost unanimously that spontaneous generation was a platitude. And among newer eminent authorities there has been marked emphasis upon the probability that life might some day be "created." Among recent Jesuit authorities who have held this position are Fathers Tongiorgi, Secchi, Palmieri and Burdo. In Germany many Catholic textbooks of recent vintage have emphasized the same point of view. And in France, where vitalism has been especially

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strong, there are important exceptions to that creed among biologists and philosophers. We think, therefore, that the too arbitrary commitment to anti-mechanism (which time may, of course, prove sound biological doctrine) is not a result of thinking on the basis of scholastic principles but the result of too fundamentalistic an approach to the whole problem of life.

For Unfortunate Children

GRANTED that there is a juvenile delinquency problem in every large city—in other words, that agencies other than the home are forced to deal with the results of the deficiencies and failures of the home — it would be generally agreed that the less legal and strictly punitive these measures are, the better it is for the children involved as well as for society at large. To give a child a court record, which may sometimes be, at least technically, a criminal record, is to put through the machinery constructed to deal with responsible guilt a socially unformed being who is almost invariably a victim of others. It is deplored in its essence and its effects by all right-thinking people, even when it is necessary; and many of the efforts of modern child welfare have been directed toward making it less necessary. A notable contribution in New York City is now made by Mayor La Guardia, in the shape of a new bureau founded to deal constructively and completely, not merely legally, with juvenile offenders. It is composed of representatives of the city departments involved in the various public aspects of juvenile delinquency—the Court of Domestic Relations, the Juvenile Aid Bureau of the Police Department, the Board of Education, the Hospital, Welfare, Health and Park Departments, and the Children's Court. This "Intake Bureau," which will be known as the Bureau of Adjustments, will study the cases of neglected or vicious children who become the concern of the law, investigate the conditions which seem to be responsible, and make practical suggestions for treatment, counsel or aid. One of its chief purposes is to keep first offenders from undergoing a regular court arraignment whenever that is possible. Its efforts are to be coordinated with those of the various private agencies in the field, and the facilities of all these departments and groups will be at the disposal of the bureau.

Were It Not Better Done—?"

THE NEWS that there are to be poetry clinics set up all over the country to assist amateur bards to meditate the thankless muse more strictly will be read with mixed feelings. There can be little doubt that the chairman of the poetry division — unwonted category!—of the General Federation of Women's Clubs is speaking truth when she says that "there is in the heart of every mortal an urge to write poetry." We do not question, indeed we think it very likely, that the clinic already functioning in Washington has received samples of the creative output of "carefree young schoolgirls, staid business men, society devotees and men and women trembling in the rays of the westering sun." Every observer of his kind knows that children lisp in numbers, even when the numbers scan but indifferently; that adolescents take to rhyming about life and fate as easily as to breathing; that almost every middle-aged man or woman has up a sleeve somewhere an unwritten poem about elves, about the spring, about Meeting Life with a Smile. But the possible objections to doing anything about all this—we say it with great diffidence—might seem to be twofold: Imprimis, granted that it is desirable to teach people to be even more poetically expressive, is it possible? Secundo, granted that it is possible—is it desirable? The world is surely fuller of rhyme and rhythm, of songs that scan and songs that triumphantly refuse to scan, than it ever was before. It might be wiser to let well enough alone. Mr. Belloc has consolation, in "The Path to Rome," for all who wished to write poetry and didn't get around to it. He seems to think that not a bad arrangement, and on the whole we agree with him.

Cultivating Calm

ONE OF the senior statesmen of Great Britain, we have it on reliable confidential advice, is in the habit when conferences about the unsettled condition of Europe and the world are at their worst, of remarking, after a pull on his pipe, "Let us be calm." This seems to center attention on him as no other aphorism could. The other conferees look at him as if he might be suspected of having gone off his head. He, however, holds his ground and practises what he preaches, answering eye for eye the other conferees and emitting clouds of smoke and ponderable quantities of calm. This is a human item for historians. It should be in the record and not guessed at by future maggots of the newspaper and documentary files. Because, according to the reliable informant, it is important; with the constant failure of institutions for peace in Europe, it is having an effect which so far is like that of the small boy at Lyden who put his finger in the hole in the dyke and saved the town. How much longer his counsel can prevail against the opposite disposition is of course problematical. There he is, however, and the angry seas of the cultivators of uncalm, of disparate motions and and emotions, threats, sudden intransigence and even the dealing in large ways of death, of destruction, so far have beat around him while he, to change the figure, sits like a barnacle on a rock in a sea of disputation.

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IS IT ZERO HOUR?

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

SO MANY extraordinary events have taken place in Europe that no one can predict with any certainty what the next weeks may bring. But it is probably not useless to explore as far as one can a few of the positions which have been taken by peoples upon whom the destiny of a Continent especially depends. I should like to make just three points, in the hope that they may prove of some value to my friends who are peering eastward with genuine anxiety.

First, the sole possible guarantee of peace is disarmament, and the sole possible way to get ready for war is to arm. We know that better than we did a few months ago. A League of Nations or a World Court will not be effective if certain powers are so completely militarized that they can afford not to accept a decision made by a concert of powers. This was not yet wholly apparent when Japan marched into Manchukuo, because after all the Far East was on the periphery of League interests. But when Mussolini challenged Geneva and attacked Ethiopia, doubt was no longer permissible. International law, recognizing a covenant freely arrived at between the nations, had to respect the sovereignty of this imperiled African state. It could not hold with the Italians that there was any principle allowing an alien power the right of invasion to correct alleged "abuses." But against a thoroughly militarized Rome international agreements as such could not prevail. Collective disapproval was expressed through sanctions, but these were not permitted to constitute what Mussolini might have termed a warlike act.

More recently German rearmament has likewise challenged the system of collective security thus far established. So long as the Hitler government abrogated provisions of the Versailles treaty, little opposition to it was manifest because the fact that this treaty had been obtained by force was too widely recognized abroad. No statesman was willing to defend before international public opinion a number of restrictions once placed upon German domestic life, and therefore a German show of strength sufficed to secure a reconstructed army and navy. But when by marching into the Rhineland the Nazis abrogated the Locarno treaties, a different situation was created. It is true that there has always been a good deal of opposition to those treaties inside Germany. Yet they had been voluntarily signed in order to show that the German government was interested vitally in international cooperation. And therefore the happenings of the past two weeks could only mean—must necessarily mean—that militarization had proceeded so far under Hitler that the League could be treated like a debating society. Had it not been for a real threat made by the French, German reoccupation of the Rhineland would have met with no resistance.

The conclusion is that the danger of war will increase as long as armaments increase. As recently as 1932, there was still time to make real progress toward disarmament. Today there is no comparable hope in sight, and until there is, existing peace mechanisms are inoperative outside very narrow limitations.

Second, armament is not military only. No people can afford war unless its economic situation and its political solidarity can be depended upon to resist strain. Accordingly the present alignment in Europe is less threatening than it might otherwise be. The internal situation in Germany, for example, is too loaded with dynamite to allow the government to exercise a free hand. Though the army and its auxiliaries are more than strong enough to curb uprising and dissatisfaction, they know that a military venture would imperil Hitler's situation unless there were actual invasion of German soil by French troops. Here lies the root of Nazi strength and weakness. It can act against the League because it realizes that the League dare not attack; but it cannot itself carry out an attack against the major powers associated in the League.

This "other side" of armament naturally also explains why the French have been unwilling to carry on a preventive war, even when that would have been a relatively minor exploit. Public opinion, concerned with problems of economic depression and social distress, has been so hostile to the notion of combat that war is almost inconceivable in France today excepting when there is actual invasion and attack. Nor are the Germans, faced with economic difficulties of almost unparalleled gravity, in any manner a people from whom a victor nation could expect to recoup the costs of a war. Much the same might be said of England or even Italy as has been said here about France. Territorial gains in Abyssinia will never pay either interest or principal on the sums which Mussolini has invested. Indeed, only the actual conquest of Egypt could do that—and by this time it is surely evident that the British Empire is in no immediate danger of "cracking up," which is what some Italian advocates of African adventure seem to have assumed.

Matters would naturally be much more precari-

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ous if military alliances between nations were so nearly dependable that the risks of conflict would be greatly minimized. But while a solid political front has been organized against Germany, the violator of Locarno, and while it seems clear that Hitler has as yet unearthed no ally willing even to take his side in political discussion, we are far from the moment when genuinely viable military cooperation would take cognizance of anything short of a war of aggression. During the Italian crisis, France held aloof while M. Laval arranged a series of adroit hems and haws. In dealing with Germany the British have been quite as subtle and non-committal. One might almost fancy, were there no evidence to the contrary, that the conduct of both had been prearranged to avoid the outbreak of a disturbance neither wants.

Third, the chances are that armament of the second sort will become more effective, with the result that tension and danger must increase. So far it has been possible in the militarist countries to look upon the army as the best form of unemployment relief and as the least dangerous kind of public works activity. Most of the applause which has greeted the expansion of the Reichswehr and the creation of forces auxiliary to it is based upon the satisfaction felt by a great many men and their families over the "career opportunities" afforded. One can easily understand that the newly erected corps of officers will look with dissatisfaction upon anything designed to take away the place in the sun which has now been especially created for them. I suppose much the same thing could be said of Italy.

But this restoration of the military caste reposes upon dangerously insecure foundations. Germany is today really a poor country. It lacks both raw materials and income from foreign trade; its credit garnering ability is virtually nil. In addition, the Nazi revolution has been extraordinarily costly. The huge sums expended for propaganda and political activity; the destruction of many enterprises and sources of income both in and outside the country; the dwindling of the tourist traffic owing to the unwillingness of former well-paying guests to visit the Fatherland—these are among the many bills which Hitler has presented to a still faithful people. Consequently it is no wonder that all Germany is becoming increasingly aware of the thin ice underneath, and increasingly sceptical of the theory that the end of the rainbow is brown.

The answer to popular insight into the tremendous costs of militarization under such circumstances can only be twofold. One must seek to demonstrate anew that the army is really valuable, and for this reason such actions as the remilitarization of the Rhineland must be staged at regular intervals. It is undeniable that a government less concerned with troops and more interested in trade could not afford to indulge in such patriotic exploits, and it is therefore possible for the Nazis to shout loudly, "See, our army does do much!" Naturally actual achievement need not always be present. The propaganda office may content itself with cooking up a scare, the moral of which will be obvious. Second, one can hold out the hope that military men will eventually remedy the abuses from which the people suffer. It will step in to hamper the exercise of tyranny. It will protect religion. It will prevent disorder. The more the masses suffer from poverty, exploitation and brutality, the more anxious will they be to hope for intervention by the army.

As a result of these two factors—discontent and power—it is only too probable that the strength of the soldiery in such countries will grow rather than decline. But as it grows it costs. Russia is surely evidence enough on that point. But nations like Italy and Germany cannot indefinitely bear those costs without reducing the population as a whole to the status of worker bees struggling to maintain drones. Only foreign credits can relieve that tension, unless we witness shortly the astounding miracle of a recapture by Europe of its lost foreign trade. And it is unnecessary to add that such credits would be outright gifts, which supposes on the part of the donors a rare naïveté unusual in financial circles even in this modern world.

Looking ahead, one can see only the likelihood of pressure — ceaseless, remorseless pressure grinding down those in the lower castes and exposing those in military command to temptations of recklessness and monomania. Whether the dikes of European society are strong enough to resist that impact remains to be seen. The mere spectator cannot avoid feeling that sometime, somewhere there must be a flood. I personally am not so much afraid of the war that might come if there were a fatal break somewhere as of the social convulsions which must set in if the present situation lasts. These are the three points. I do not know what we can do about them.

Folk Song

Over the landscape all day long
Three figures wrought a wordless song—
A horse, a man, and a dog behind—
Up and down till the soil was lined
With a furrow-pattern of melody,
Singing of earth's fertility.

So are the songs of harvest made—
When the year still lies in springtime's shade
While three bent, friendly figures go
In steady rhythm to and fro
In single file, with a plow aligned,
A horse, a man, and a dog behind.

FRANCES HALL.

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LEST WE FORGET

By JAMES F. CUNNINGHAM

Commenting on doctrine and achievement, Father Cunningham finds the principal Catholic difficulty in a certain lack of ecclesiastical leadership, and suggests ways and means for supplying this. "Our people are restive under the policy of watchful waiting and the avoidance of issues, for such a program is often mistaken for weakness, and the sad part of it is, it is weakness and religious illiteracy." The necessity for an active and well-planned study-club movement he considers obvious.—The Editors.

MUCH has been said about the encyclical letter, "Quadragesimo Anno." Many learned writers and speakers have illuminated its hidden recesses of teaching with their brilliant commentaries; it has been the subject of discussion for every Catholic editor; it has been on the lips of every Catholic radio speaker as well as on the tongue of every priest who has preached "Social Justice"; yet some of us who labor "amongst the workingmen and amongst employers" believe that one of the most distinctive remedies, indeed the first remedy, proposed by the Holy Father has been neglected and in some cases completely disregarded by those to whom the message was indited.

In the recent encyclical, "Ad Catholici Sacerdotii," the present Pontiff says that "the priest contributes most effectively to the solution, or at least the mitigation, of social conflicts since he preaches Christian brotherhood," and directs him in the "Quadragesimo Anno" to "gather and train" from amongst the ranks of the workingmen and employers "auxiliary soldiers of the Church" who know the mentality and aspirations of their classes "and who with kindly charity will be able to win their hearts." But let the Holy Father himself present the case:

> Present circumstances therefore, Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, indicate clearly the course to be followed. Nowadays, as more than once in the history of the Church, we are confronted with a world which in large measure has almost fallen back into paganism. In order to bring back to Christ these whole classes of men who have denied Him, we must gather and train from amongst their very ranks auxiliary soldiers of the Church, men who know their mentality and their aspirations, and who with kindly fraternal charity will be able to win their hearts. Undoubtedly the first and immediate apostles of the workingmen must themselves be workingmen, while the apostles of the industrial world should themselves be employers and merchants. It is your chief duty, Venerable Brethren, and that of your clergy, to seek diligently, to select prudently, and train fittingly these lay apostles, amongst workingmen and amongst employers.

Practically every priest of today has felt arising from his parishioners the spirit of Catholic activity, the zeal for Church expansion, a new birth of Church loyalty to offset the growing anti-clericalism in this country. There is on the part of the working class a yearning to uphold the conservative attitude of the Church yet at the same time to abandon the pose of the ordinary Catholic, impatient but silent suffering under ridicule and scorn. This, of course, is the lot of great numbers of our people, for they are uninformed on some of the most fundamental teachings of their religion, and silence is the only solution for their difficulty.

The non-Catholic attitude has often been like that of the fox hunters. The Catholic Church is fair prey, it is a game of fox and hounds and the fox always runs. What would happen were the fox to turn about and chase the hounds? Let me tell you! It would cause dismay on the part of the attackers whose position is untenable; it would give occasion to the cry, "But you are not playing the game, you are supposed to run." Apologies would come from the same orators whose lies go unchallenged and there would be less inclination to defame the Church or its ministers regardless of fact and of truth.

It is an age when every soap-box orator and many a college professor as well feel free to dogmatize on religion, when insane solutions for problems to which the Church gives sane answers are bandied about, when Catholics are called upon to defend the teachings of the Catholic clergy and find them publicly at loggerheads on points the layman considers important. With their limited knowledge they are often unable to distinguish clerical opinion from Church teaching. The thinking Catholic man and woman wants to know the Catholic answer to modern problems. Our people are restive under the policy of watchful waiting and the avoidance of issues, for such a program is often mistaken for weakness, and the sad part of it is, it is weakness and religious illiteracy.

Within the past month the writer has been approached by three distinct and separated groups of laymen with a zeal to spread the teachings of the Church. They are fully able and quite happy to follow Church guidance and authority but are without leadership, or training, without a background of Catholic teaching which would make

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of them good apologists and conservative speakers "among workingmen and among employers." What to do! The answer is quite apparent and in full accord with the plan indicated by Pius XI, "A Study Club and Discussion Group" in each parish. It is not a complete answer to the problem but a good beginning, and an acceptance of the charge to train "auxiliary soldiers of the Church."

Recently the writer was called upon to address a group of Newman Club girls in a New York City college. The institution has had a reputation, deservedly or not, for zealous Communist action on the part of its students. There were several Communist sympathizers and active organizers among the listeners who afterward requested an informal discussion of points of Catholic social thought.

"These Catholic girls," one of them said, "the leaders in the group especially, will have nothing to do with us whenever we ask them questions about the Catholic Church. They run from us. We can talk to them on any subject but their own Church and when we ask them what she teaches or what is her attitude toward Communism, for example, they don't know."

Speaking to one of the Catholic girls who participated in the discussion, and marveled that there were Catholic answers, I asked, "Why don't you discuss religion with these girls?"

"But they are so well-trained in Communism, Father," she said, "that they trip us on everything and of course we know nothing of Catholic social thought, we did not 'get' that in school; so we say nothing." The speaker was one of the few who had come from a Catholic high school.

From observation of the Communist leaders I found they were well-informed, yet so very vulnerable, and our Catholic girls of the same age and position in life so pitifully weak and untrained. With just a minimum of Catholic information they could have given satisfactory answers to every social difficulty propounded by the "cell" organizer.

Our Catholic high schools, few as they are, have begun to teach Catholic social thought as part of their modern program, yet there are hundreds of thousands of our young people throughout the nation who never enter the door of a Catholic high school. They must face problems their parents never had to consider, difficulties for which home, school and religious training has not prepared them, and the Church as well as the home has an obligation to equip them for the future.

Let me briefly paint a statistical picture. The Catholic population of the United States is above 20,000,000, approximately one-sixth of the total inhabitants. Of the total population about 20,000,000 are children of grammar school age (six to thirteen), and according to this ratio 3,300,000 of these should be Catholic, although our Catholic parochial schools list about 2,200,000 as being cared for by our educational system. Except for the unsatisfactory Sunday School we are not teaching about one-third of these children. Our high schools present a picture still more distressing in spite of the good work done. According to estimates there are more than 9,000,000 children of high-school age (fourteen to seventeen). There should be close to 1,500,000 Catholic boys and girls being educated in our high schools, yet we list, according to the more recent reports from our 1,134 Catholic high schools, not quite 200,000 pupils. We are not reaching 1,300,000 of our high school youth.

If we are unable to care for one-third of our children of grammar school age and we really do care for only one-seventh of our high school children, then parish study clubs come close to being a necessity if we take seriously the admonition of Saint Paul to Timothy, "Keep that which is committed to thy trust."

Perhaps I will encounter less criticism if I cite our own parish as typical of Catholic parishes. It has a complete organizational program and is staffed by five active assistants under the direction of a wise and capable pastor who has seen the allotted three score and ten years. For fifty years the parish school has sent into the world over 100 boys and girls each year, almost twice that number in the last few years with two graduations for the 1,400 children who crowd its doors. Each of the assistant priests teaches in the classroom daily, each day the pastor spends several hours in the school. Every possible effort is made by priest and Sister alike that these boys and girls be prepared religiously, as well as academically, for life. In January and June, the doors close on the graduates and they go into the world with their religious training, in 75 percent of the cases, at an end. What they are taught thereafter depends on Sunday sermons and unorganized reading.

Every parish has the same problem. Some have attempted to solve it and some do solve it by study clubs, though for the most part after the children leave our parish schools, unless Catholic higher education claims them, they are given no further Catholic teaching. At the most there are sporadic efforts on the part of individual priests who recognize the unfortunate situation and attempt in unorganized fashion to cope with it. But why should we lose interest in our boys and girls when they still need instruction? Every time they listen to a radio program, read a newspaper, they face problems for which the catechism has not prepared them.

In the last nine months in the United States there have been 67,495 minors arrested, says the director of the Division of Investigation of the Department of Justice, J. Edgar Hoover. "Lack of teaching is the cause of crime," he says. Let us

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keep on with the training of our boys and girls after they leave our grammar schools. Here is an answer in part to our crime problem. Let us continue their education through study clubs.

I am sure that every priest has at one time or another encountered this condition. Talking to one of the young men of his parish, he says, "Do you belong to the ——— Society?", or to the young woman, "Are you a member of the ——— Society?" In both cases the answer is, "No." Why? "All they do is talk," he is informed; "now and then they have a dance or card party, but they don't do anything constructive." The fault is a traditional one. The society goes to Holy Communion once a month and has a monthly meeting conducted for the most part by the older members of the parish. These activities are good, but accomplish so little with our younger people. Suppose that the society does carry on some social activity, a card party, a dance or reception at intervals during the year, are the church organizations formed primarily to entertain or amuse people, or to interest them in religion and bring them closer to their Church?

If such activity is necessary as a means of increasing membership, we will find that parish study clubs will bring new blood and active members to these societies. Many parishes have the Little Theatre Movement, amateur theatricals, as part of their program. Why not set aside one night for these young men and women to study advanced Catholic thought? With the poise and diction and confidence gained through the study of dramatics, what skilled apologists they will make!

Every Holy Name man is interested in a living wage, fair conditions of employment, collective bargaining; every sodality member wants to hear about marriage—even yet the Lenten preacher who chooses to discourse on the subject gets the larger crowds. Each of the parish societies would be interested in a group study club. Why not give them this common interest? It will be worth while.

But are these people interested? Not all, of course, but enough to make the course worth while for the director and those who participate. For the past year and a half, in the before-mentioned parish, a class intended for non-Catholics (the so-called convert class) has been attended chiefly by Catholics, about 70 percent of the class, who want to know more about the fundamentals of their faith. When the course has ended and the non-Catholics taken individually to complete their preparation for baptism, the Catholics want to continue, but where?

The study club presents an opportunity for discussion of modern Catholic problems. If any priest imagines that his Catholic people have no questions to ask, let him open a meeting to free discussion from the floor, or offer to answer questions. He will be amazed to find the number of his auditors who have questions which are important to them and show some thought. Here is the place to teach Catholic principles of belief as well as of action. I was just a little startled a few weeks ago to find how many in one study club group were quite sure that the Church taught the old fallacy, "The end justifies the means." I am sure a census of our people would indicate that perhaps a majority of them believe that "all people who are not Catholics will be lost," one of the many bits of misinformation passed along to their non-Catholic friends. One member of a family in a study club can rectify the false impressions of a large number of people.

Many subjects of importance today the priest is unable to discuss from the pulpit, yet every week our Catholics hear lay speakers with theories of social action at variance with Catholic teaching. The study club is the center whence may be diffused reliable information not only on social problems but on the great body of Catholic doctrine and teaching.

As time passes, the social problems which interest us because of their moral content will become more and more important while our people will still be as unenlightened as ever unless we take means to prevent such a condition. If we cannot use the pulpit, if the occasional Sunday sermon is an unfit vehicle for teaching social principles, let us use the means at hand, informal but informative, which will make of our people understanding Catholics and capable apologists.

Here is something—the study club—in which priest and layman are interested. It presents a twofold advantage in which both must cooperate, the priest to teach and direct, the layman to gather up those who wish to be taught. The contact will be invigorating and helpful to both. It is not a new idea, it is working in some few parishes, but we need more action. Abundant help is offered by the National Catholic Welfare Conference which has organized studies of the encyclicals, which furnishes upon request complete information as to technique, books to be secured, and the more successful methods of organizing such clubs. The priest or layman is not entering an unexplored field; he has sound advice at his penpoint, his for the asking.

Successful efforts in this department have been made by zealous bishops and priests in our midst. May we who lag behind profit by their example. In the next few years when the young men and women from our Catholic schools find themselves unequipped to meet modern problems and perhaps fall away from their Mother Church, we will reiterate that famous dictum, "Something must be done." Our successors will wonder why we did not follow the instructions of the present Pope, and give them study clubs. Did we forget the Holy Father's admonition?

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THE CRISIS IN FRANCE[1]

By F. A. HERMENS

WHAT would the introduction of a workable right of dissolution into the French Constitution mean? Nobody ignores the fact that the lack of efficient party organizations exerts a considerable influence on French politics. But, on the other hand, it is curious to see that all observers of French politics agree that an unrestricted right of dissolution might change things as much as the British electoral reform of 1867 did. In this connection the absence of organized parties may even present a certain advantage. A strong party may be willing and able to run the risk of an election. A single deputy, who is often years in paying the debts incurred during the last election campaign, frequently cannot. No member of Parliament would like new expenses and new worries, even if he is able to bear the new financial and physical burdens. Anybody would think it over before he votes against a government which can dissolve Parliament, and would be willing to contribute to the elimination of the surprise element in French politics. The government would, at last, have a weapon in its hands in order to defend itself against undisciplined attacks from all sides.

Moreover, the absence of political organization in France is somehow counterbalanced by the fact that there is a clear-cut division between Right and Left. Most electors do not know much about the parties for which they vote, but they know very well whether they cast their votes for the "bloc" of the Right or the "bloc" of the Left. With a few exceptions, every deputy is elected by the whole vote either of the Right or of the Left of his constituency. Hence, after a general election, there is a clear majority and minority in the Chamber. Of course, the people want the majority to govern. Both "blocs" have—as long as the traditional period of confusion does not set in, which usually occurs a year or two after the election—a generally recognized leader. At the last general elections of 1932, Herriot was the leader of the Left and Tardieu the leader of the Right. When the President of the Republic appointed the former Prime Minister, he only acknowledged the result of a plebiscite, exactly as is the case in England. Suppose Herriot had been able to dissolve the Chamber whenever it voted against him and had made it clear from the outset that he intended to do so. Probably the majority would have followed him just as eagerly as it later abandoned him as well as his successors. Again, most observers of French politics agree that in this case Cabinets would probably last as long as the Chamber does; therefore, ministers would have years of office in front of them rather than months, weeks or sometimes days.

It would take a few years before all the results of such a revolutionary change in French politics would be felt. But they would be beneficial. I scarcely need to explain them in detail. First, there would be a Cabinet, both "strong" and "stable." Ministers would really be able to take the reins of government into their hands and there would be every reason for them to do so. They would be in a position to lead Parliament in matters of legislation, and so give it, to use the words of Maurice Barrès, the "brains" which it needs so badly. They would not have to tolerate parliamentary pressure in the field of administration. The single deputy or senator would cease to be one of the 900 omnipotent and irresponsible oligarchs of the Third Republic. He would have to relegate the decision of all major political matters to the Prime Minister and the electors. It would be possible to eliminate the unlawful influence of these oligarchs on the civil service and the judges, since there would be a real authority over them. The same would hold true in so far as civil servants themselves are concerned. Actually, laws have been designed to subject them to a real discipline. These would be unnecessary. The only thing wanted is a government capable of applying the existing laws, which provide for the dismissal of every official who fails to execute given orders. A strong government would look to that.

It would, in addition, be able to undertake the much-wanted administrative reform, making it clear to civil servants what their duties are and rendering it possible for them to execute these duties without having to face the pressure of members of Parliament and of minor party politicians. The same holds true in so far as the judiciary is concerned. Also, budgetary legislation would be much simplified, since the Chamber would, on the whole, have to accept the proposals of the government. Last but not least there would be a possibility of carrying out a real foreign policy. The French foreign secretaries and diplomatic service know quite well what they have to do. All that is needed is a government able to act according to their recommendations. The reform in question would guarantee that and, consequently, the government would be able to lead the people also in this important field where, at the present time, owing to the purely negative influence of parlia-

[1] This is the concluding instalment of an article which began in last week's issue.

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ment, a complete stagnation replaces the initiative which could be expected from one of the most powerful nations of Europe.

It would seem simple to execute a reform whose necessity is so obvious. But bad democratic institutions have a further drawback. To attempt to reform them by the constitutional means they provide themselves practically amounts to putting the cart before the horse. Vested interests grow around the abuses, and, after some time, they have become powerful enough to make any legal reform impossible, at least as long as those who profit from the existing state of affairs can act as they like. If, in the case of France, deputies and senators agreed to the introduction of an unrestricted right of dissolution into the Constitution, it would be tantamount to the signing of their own death-warrant. Most of them would have been degraded to the rank of "back-benchers," and all of them would have had to renounce to those mysterious opportunities which make so many French politicians rich in a few years. Only an outward pressure can remedy such a situation. In France, this outward pressure occurs almost periodically. From time to time, a new scandal breaks out and it becomes obvious that dishonesty has joined incapacity again. The people revolt, threatening to "throw the deputies into the Seine," which borders the Palais Bourbon. When that happens, parliamentarians are, for a few weeks or months, as humble as they have been proud before. They then submit to a real political leadership, and, if the pressure lasts long enough, it ought to be possible to induce them to accept the fundamental constitutional change required.

This seemed to be the case in February, 1934. The Stavisky scandal broke out after the Chamber had very successfully proved its inability to do anything about the budget. Six governments had been overthrown between May, 1932, and February, 1934. The riots of February 6 were more serious than any comparable event since the communistic revolt in Paris in 1871. At the bottom of their hearts, even the deputies of the Left were glad to see the old Doumergue arriving to smooth out political hatreds by his "dictatorship of smiling." Doumergue had advocated constitutional reform since 1932; many others had done so at the same time and with more vigor. At first he seemed able to carry out his plans. The parliamentary committee for the "reform of the state" adopted them by overwhelming majorities. But as soon as the outward pressure began to cease, and after Doumergue had been able to fill the treasury in so far as to enable a successor to govern for some time, the deputies and senators rallied for the defense of their privileges. What had been right a few months ago became wrong. The right of dissolution, one of the pillars of British democracy, became a Fascist device. Doumergue had to resign, though he had watered his proposals considerably by giving the President of the Republic the unrestricted right to dissolve the Chamber only after a newly elected Chamber had been assembled for at least one year. Before that time lapsed, he had to assure himself of the consent of the Senate, as he must always do now.

The circumstances which brought about the fall of Doumergue are typical. The decisive factor was the new atmosphere prevailing in the Chamber and in the Senate. Individual members of Parliament revolted against the leadership imposed upon them. Léon Blum, the Socialist leader, wrote some articles in the *Populaire,* which gave these parliamentarians the ammunition of rational arguments which they wanted. The Senators led the attack. The proposed reform was particularly dangerous for them. They would have found it impossible seriously to control a Cabinet either called to office or confirmed therein by a popular vote. The Senate would have lost most of the importance it had gained since about 1890.

The play of private ambitions was not less typical. The leader in its disorderly resumption was Flandin. Still a minister of the Cabinet of Doumergue, he made an open overture to the revolting Radical-Socialists. His speech in Arras assured them of his help if they wanted to overthrow Doumergue. The Radicals accepted, and Doumergue was removed from office by a man whose duty it would have been to defend him. The electors, of course, were not consulted—there is only one way for them to make their voice heard during the term of the Chamber, and that is, by riot or revolution.

Since the failure of Doumergue, the prospect for constitutional reform has become darker than ever. The vested interests have now succeeded in persuading the people that the right of dissolution is Fascist. Generally, reason does not prevail against passion aroused by interest. But there is a growing number of people who realize that it is impossible to achieve anything with the given institutions. They openly express their despair of achieving a legal reform. Tardieu was the first one to do so. He declared that he now pinned his hope on "acting minorities," which is, of course, only a euphemism for revolution. Curiously enough, only a short while elapsed before Flandin followed suit. The Radicals upheld him only so long as they needed him. Afterward they overthrew him as they had overthrown Doumergue. Then Flandin also retired from active politics; in an article published in an Antwerp newspaper soon afterward, he expressed views on democratic politics as pessimistic as those of Tardieu. It would be easy to quote many other leading personalities in the same sense, who are by no means confined to the parties of the Right. Some of them have now, openly or discreetly,

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pinned their hopes on the Croix de Feu. In this organization a large part of the members, perhaps even its president, Colonel De La Rocque, want nothing but a constitutional reform on the English model; among them is the well-known writer André Maurois, once a member of the Alliance Démocratique, a party in the center of French politics.

But there is not much chance for reform by revolutionary means either. The next general elections will probably give the parties of the Left a large majority. They prepare themselves to triumph over the "Fascist" enemies of the republic. If they are capable of a minimum amount of self-discipline, they will be able to govern and to dissolve the Leagues of the Right. If the depression ceases, they may even hold office for some years to come. But there are many thoughtful people in their own ranks now who realize that the *Affaire Stavisky* has not been the last *affaire* in the history of the Third Republic, as it was not the first one. Dishonesty and incapacity will combine again to anger a large part of the population. These people will organize in some fashion for a new attack against democracy. That will give the parties of the Left the battle-field they want: They can save the Republic as they did so often. That is *politique pure,* and so much easier to do than, e. g., to balance the budget! Only the Left won't realize that something is wrong with a republic which must be saved ever and ever again, and does not allow its followers to do the useful work that the nation wants.

KIPLING—AN ESTIMATE

By JOSEPH J. REILLY

ON DECEMBER 29, the world paused long enough to recall that Kipling was seventy years old. Twenty days later he was dead and one of the most amazing careers in English literary history was ended.

Everybody knows that Kipling was born in Bombay, spent his years from six to sixteen at school in England, returned to India to do newspapering at Lahore, and by 1895 was a household word throughout the British Empire. What everybody does not know is that his name Rudyard came from a lake in Staffordshire where his father, an artist, first met his mother, that he was a nephew by marriage of the Pre-Raphaelite painter Burne-Jones and a cousin of Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, that at ten his eyes were so poor that he wore double-lensed spectacles and was nicknamed "Beetle" because he stumbled as he walked; that after his striking success in India he set out on a tour of the world which began badly, for here in America no newspaper would give him a place and in London after months of neglect he was glad to accept £3 for his first brace of stories.

But time avenged him. The little paper-covered books he published in India had so enormous a sale there that the fame of them finally swept across the seas and set two continents devouring "Plain Tales from the Hills," "Soldiers Three," "The Phantom Rickshaw and Other Tales," "Departmental Ditties," "Barrack-Room Ballads," and half a dozen other volumes which this astonishing youth had published. Catchy phrases from the stories and the ballads caught the public eye and ear until "But that's another story," "The female of the species is more deadly than the male," "You're a better man than I am, Gunga Din," were bandied about by half the smart youths of the States and the Empire. The writings of this grave-looking little man with the bespectacled eyes and the square, deeply-cleft chin whose picture was everywhere became a passion, a kind of middle-class literary religion. His books were in every traveler's handbag, on every bookstall, in every gift box, in every home; at Christmas they flooded the mails; no father's "den" was complete without "The Betrothed" in passepartout on the wall. So complete was the acceptance of Kipling, so universal the adoration he inspired, that his tales were translated into a dozen languages and became a cult in France where he appealed as few French writers were able to do. The flood waters of his popularity carried him to such an eminence that even now, after they have been receding for a generation, 300,000 copies of his books are sold annually in Britain and America.

In 1899, while in New York, Kipling was stricken with pneumonia. As the outcome hung in the balance and only the sufferer's indomitable will to live kept death in check, the world held its breath and wished him victory. Kipling recovered but something tragic happened the reason whereof is still a mystery. What happened was that, though a certain talent remained, Kipling's genius had taken flight never to return. Since that illness not a single great poem or a single great story ever issued from his pen. It is true that "Kim" (1901) and two short stories, "They" (1904) and "An Habitation Enforced" (1905), are distinguished, but the astonishing something which had brought the English-speaking world to his feet is not in them. While the powers of Thomas Hardy, the only contemporary

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Englishman whose genius overshadowed his, burned brightly till death, Kipling's was quenched in his early thirties. Here, verily, to borrow a phrase which his earliest novel made a byword, was "the light that failed." He remained on his eminence, afar and aloof, to become in time a name rather than a man, a myth rather than a reality. Now and then the mists about his summit lifted for a moment and it was whispered that someone had a glimpse of him; occasionally he broke silence in verse or prose, but the ring of the voice, the magic of the words, were gone.

Much has been said about Kipling as the voice of the British Empire, the high priest of British world supremacy, who awakened in Britain and her colonies a sense of such racial unity as belongs to a people that had burst its insular boundaries and become the greatest of modern colonizing powers. All this is true and it is equally true that in such poems as "The White Man's Burden" he attempted to weave about British colonial conquest the aura of duty. What may be no more interesting than these things but is far more important are the answers to three questions: What accounted for Kipling's enormous popularity, a phenomenon unparalleled except in the case of Byron? What great literature did he give us? What among his writings have the best chance to survive?

The British reading public of the early nineties, being still fond of roast beef, ale and cricket, were weary of stories in which action was lost among endless psychological refinements, confused by the caprices of the comic spirit, stifled by the aroma of decay, or coarsened by a realism too gross for either British taste or refinement. Stevenson had flung the door wide to the winds of romantic yesterdays and had been duly acclaimed, but Stevenson's work was virtually done and people were ready for the romance of contemporary life even though it wore the outer vesture of realism. They wanted to rediscover wholesome and normal women and men with red blood who spent their energy in the world's work, who took more kindly to cartridge belts than chrysanthemums and preferred a battle to a paradox. They wanted to rediscover Englishmen who did things—real things, new things, somewhat with the brains and very much with their hands. And then came Kipling.

Here were tales the reading public could understand and enjoy without pretense, for they tingled with action and pictured life lived in the open by men whose emotions were strong, and who, though sometimes disregarding the decalog, had not yet learned to refine it away. They were horsy and often vulgar, with a turn for calling a spade a spade, and they chortled gleefully when summoned to face black giants in a fight to the death. Their women were not all angels, but they were at home in the saddle, some of them could win archery prizes, and others could combat cholera. What Kipling pictured was a heroic society endowed with the fundamental virtues which the popular mind admires but, going further, he implied that achievements were possible not to birth and education alone but, as in the persons of the famous "soldiers three," to the common man as well. Finally, "Mr. Kipling était Anglais d'une façon simple, violente et, de plus, très nouvelle," says M. Chevrillon, and for all these various reasons the mass of Englishmen took him to their arms accordingly.

Kipling was not only fortunate in the hour of his arrival but in the setting of his tales. To most Englishmen India was a name rather than a place, as remote, as mysterious, as unrealized by the imagination as it had been in the days of Edmund Burke. For them Kipling gave this swarming empire color, shape, actuality; he captured its heat, its smells, its obscenities, and its splendors; he made its superstitions, its savagery, its endless and violent contrasts, its racial and religious antipathies, and the poetry and romance which sprang from the soul of these things seem real. Upon the social crust spread thinly over this mysterious empire, British civil, military and commercial life had its being in which virtue counted its victories no less than folly and vice. Like Bret Harte before him, like Jack London and Joseph Conrad after him, Kipling had the luck to be a literary discoverer and for millions of English-speaking people, American no less than British, he put India on the map.

Kipling not only arrived at the psychological moment, not only presented a new empire to the reading world, but he revealed literary gifts of an extraordinary kind. His short stories thrilled with life. They created the illusion of reality. They were quick from the arresting first line to the steel-like snap of the final word. They gave the reader what Henry James called "the sense of living at the expense of others." They shunned all deadening literary traditions and beat out a path for themselves without waste motion or surplusage of words. Kipling had his literary tricks but it was not through trickery that he achieved results but through a gift which was abundant, extraordinary, well-informed, sure of itself, of the material it employed, and of the men and women it portrayed. That gift was genius.

This incredible young man not content with tales, long and short, wrote poems which also caught the imagination of the public. As in the case of Burns, Kipling was at his best in dialect or in the diction of those who know little about books but much about life at first hand. There is high talent in the stately but irritating "Recessional" and a modicum perhaps in the "Ballad of East and West," the "Conundrum of the Work-

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shops," "Tomlinson," "When Earth's Last Picture Is Painted" and "White Man's Burden," but there is much more in the "Last Chantey," "Soldiers and Sailors," the "Mary Gloster," "Bolivar" and "Tommy," more still in "Boots," "Fuzzy Wuzzy," "Mary Pity Women" and "Gunga Din," and genius in "Mandalay" and "Danny Deever."

To return to Kipling's stories. His gift is for the short not the long story; he cannot develop character or hold together a sustained plot; he is essentially episodic; like a sprinter he can produce terrific speed for a short space. To find him at the top of his bent we must turn away from "Captains Courageous," "The Light that Failed" and, in the opinion of many of us, even "Stalky" and "Kim" which reveal him at his second best. The things that hold us fast and evoke our admiration after three decades are to be found among his short stories, written, let it be said again, prior to the inexplicable eclipse of 1899. The shadows of weaknesses which were later to prove ruinous lay faintly over some of these—his flair for rhetoric, his obsession with machinery and mechanical details, and his tendency to exploit certain pet ideas—but in the sharp light he shed upon his finer tales they were scarcely visible and in those most certain to survive they were never present.

"He must carry a light baggage," said Anatole France, "who would make the long flight to immortality." What will Kipling's baggage be? I venture to answer: A score of poems and a round dozen of short stories. The poems for the most part will belong to the ballad tradition, be close to the soil and the emotions of the common man, and fulfil the threefold requirement of Milton by being simple, sensuous and passionate. What will the dozen stories be? On half of those there may be a difference of opinion; on the following six there can be only one: "The Man Who Would Be King," "The Courting of Dinah Shadd," "The Man Who Was," "Beyond the Pale," "Phantom Rickshaw" and, as capstone of them all, "Without Benefit of Clergy."

Transparence

Oceans are reticent—the Gulf Stream swell
Shows only in its gift of softened days,
In English cowslips or in Irish mays
But shallow waters rip and current tell.
Stars are impassive too. Aloof and slow,
They pace, each muffled in a fiery cloak,
But comets ride, hot-reined, with heels that smoke
And even children their direction know.
Ah spare me love. I have no useful guile.
My mind was put forthright into my eyes
And each arrested thought looks out apart.
I would not even have the lark's poor wile,
The sad, bare cunning that flees back and cries
To keep your foot from coming near my heart.

EILEEN DUGGAN.

POTOMAC WINTER

By VINCENT ENGELS

FOR FIVE days the weather man had been predicting snow, and each morning seemed about to justify him. There was a film of ice, formed overnight, on the pool; the air was frosty, and the sky was that luminous grey against which every twig of every tree stood out plainly, even from a distance. Snow light. We expected snow any minute. But by noon the clouds folded up, as they had done the day before, and the sun shone. Even then there remained a smell of snow in the air.

We came in from a walk one night to use this knowing phrase, and were promptly challenged. "What do you mean, the smell of snow? What does snow smell like?"

We could not answer, and some of the company undertook to do it for us.

"Like steel."

"Like cold stones."

"Like damp moss."

I listened, unable to improve on these remarks, much as they seemed to call for improvement. I thought they were on the wrong track altogether, and I wondered what the late Colonel Mac would have said to put them right. Certainly he would not have been satisfied with so glib and offhand a beginning—or with such unresounding imagery. "Snow—what does it smell like? We shall know what snow smells like when we understand what snow is. Gentlemen, it is that revealing smoke of which ice is the flaming principle. Or we may say it is a flower, of which the root is ice."

And that's the way in which the Colonel would have gone about it. I seem to hear him now. "The question, you see, can be answered, but the answer cannot be stated in simple and unimaginative terms. It was your blunder this evening, as it is the great blunder of this sterile and complacent age, to suppose that all the wisdom of man, including that profound, natural wisdom so wonderfully emanating from the intuitive process, by which we are directed to all our happiness, and because of which we are enabled without study to know the look and demeanor of Beauty, the voice of Virtue, and the smell of snow—it was your error and misfortune to suppose that all this might be expressed in words of four letters, and in simple, not to say infantile, declarative sentences, compounded of five such words."

I hope this will give you some idea of what a help the Colonel would have been to us that night. You are thinking that I invented him, but I did not. He was about eighty or ninety when I first knew him, and I was about seventy years his junior. We lived in a country where snow fell whenever it was expected to fall, and often when it was not. The tops of our fences disappeared always between the first and fifteenth of December, and in some years we did not see the ground again till May.

Often I hear people say that it must be dreadful to live in such a country. "Cooped up," they say, "for five

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months out of the year." Of course it is at once obvious that they have never lived in the north. For we never thought it was dreadful, and we were not "cooped up" in any sense of the term. We got around very easily in sleighs drawn by horses with jingling harnesses, and all told we were less confined by snow than are the winter inhabitants of Virginia by rain.

I know that old Colonel Mac did not consider it dreadful. I remember meeting him one very windy February morning, when the first small and scattered flakes of what became a blizzard were driving across the world. As I came around the corner of the post office, the wind struck me with such force that for the moment I was stopped in my tracks, and had to brace myself before going ahead. Then I saw the Colonel bearing down on me, clutching his hat with both hands and leaning backward to keep from being blown upon his face. We made the steps at about the same time, and almost collided.

"Windy morning, sir," I said.

I should think that anyone might have been excused for ignoring such a greeting. But the Colonel clung to the iron rail, fought for breath and replied, "Young man, it is excessively tempestuous."

This may look like a complaint, but as spoken by the Colonel, it sounded more like a joke. And remembering how vigorous he looked, and how good natured he was, not only then but to the end of his days, I am sure that the coldest and snowiest country in the world is better for old gentlemen than those intermediate regions where they must be hurried from the shelter of one building to the protection of the next, fearing the dampness in the air, and the dampness underfoot also.

Anyway, there we sat, on the fifth morning of the weather man's alarm, expecting it to snow, and rather anxious that it should, because for the first time in years, we were prepared for it. Last winter and the winter before, you see, we paid no attention to the weather man. We knew that an hour or two of snow could not hurt us, and a real snow, which would lie a foot deep on the level places, and three feet by the fences, surely would not fall in this day and age and latitude. And so of course, it did, both these winters, killing the flowering canes on our unhardy climbing roses, killing ten years' growth off the box, and crippling for a few years to come the beauty of the holly, the magnolias, the rhododendron —all these broad-leaf evergreens.

But this year we were prepared. Half way through December we tied armsful of pampas grass into the climbing roses, choosing this because it is in all ways better than straw, the reeds being five and six feet long, encased in a snow and water-proof skin—and then because we can cut all we want of it in the empty field, where it grows wild and in greater profusion every year, providing food and wonderful cover for the quail, and for small birds too, and in which it will soon have choked out the quack grass, the mustard, the thistles and all lower forms of vegetation. When it has done this, no doubt it will invade our borders, but meanwhile it is a beautiful thing and a blessing.

Well, the result—of all this preparation, I mean—toned the place up for the winter. The back fence looked like a row of corn shocks, very neat, and in the center of the lawn, over the crêpe myrtle which was killed to its roots last winter, was a tepee of darker stuff, which fitted into the lingering autumnal air of the pampas grass, and which on examination turned out to be the durable stems of the wild blue aster.

I don't suppose that a landscape architect would have approved the general effect. It looked less the result of a plan than of an impulse. It looked as though we enjoyed doing it, and as a matter of fact, we did. But we had faith in it. We thought it would turn the trick. And so we hoped that a lot of snow would fall, to test it, and also to let us take pleasure, for once, in our own foresight.

It finally did snow, on the fifth day of the weather man's prediction—a very beautiful snowfall, one of the loveliest I had ever seen. It reminded me of a snowfall that I read about in a poem by Robert Bridges that I cannot lay my hands on. It was dense and soft and leisurely. There was no wind outside. It came sifting in white flakes through the world's grey light, so dim a light that the hundred elm trees in the yard seemed to be the center of an immeasurable forest. Beyond the yard one could see nothing at all. There was only this densely knotted veil of snow, and the hundred trees receiving it: each twig cottony thick like the twigs of an artificial tree: white above, and the black bark a shadow for emphasis below. And every big and little tree lifted toward the low grey heaven a forest of such twigs. At the end of the yard, the great oak stood dimly as a phantom, while on a level with the windows, and parallel to them, the first limb of the terrace elm swept boldly out and faded away downward, a flourish and a signature across the scene.

The Young Star-gazer

On many a wakeful winter night
I from my window watch the sky:
Glittering, gleaming, twinkling bright,
I see a million stars go by.

They rise behind the eastern hill,
And through long hours when people rest
They glide in silence on, until
They vanish in the distant west;

And while I watch, it seems to me
The shining points (had I a glass)
Are ships upon a darkened sea
With lights that signal as they pass;

And that our world is under weigh
And sailing on thro' darkness, too,
Seeking the haven, far away,
That vessels of the star-fleet do.

A happy voyage!— I wish them all,
And hope, perhaps, another boy
Will see my lamp, and wave, and call
Across the darkness: "Ship ahoy!"

HUGH DE BLACAM.

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Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—At Paso del Norte between Texas and New Mexico on the international boundary, where the Franciscan Fathers passed on their way to New Mexico more than 350 years ago, a field Mass was recently celebrated as part of the Texas Centennial. The altar was on the American side of the boundary, but on the other side knelt 200 Mexicans who were able to assist at Mass for the first time since the churches of the state of Chihuahua were closed. * * * A new periodical, the *Catholic Worker,* has started publication in Melbourne, Australia. * * * Twenty-three Catholic hospitals in the Archdiocese of New York gave 350,000 days of free care during 1935. Operating deficit for the year reached $1,600,142.39, but donations, legacies and receipts from auxiliaries reduced the deficit to $292,438.45. * * * The first issue of *Monumenta Serica,* a journal of oriental studies published by the Catholic University of Peiping, China, contains 250 pages of articles in Chinese, German, French and English on a wide range of Chinese cultural topics. * * * Most Reverend Joseph F. Rummel recently blessed a new "floating chapel" and towing launch for missions in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Archbishop Rummel also celebrated the first Mass to be said on board. * * * The Leaflet Missal of St. Paul, Minnesota, reports that last year it distributed about 25,000 copies a week. * * * A petition signed by 9,769 invalids in hospitals and sanatoria has been presented to Georges Mandel, French Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, by a delegation headed by Canon Desgranges and Paul Claudel. The petition asks that each Sunday a Mass be broadcast over a government-controlled radio station for the special benefit of those who are too infirm to go to church. * * * A special Good Friday program will be broadcast over the WJZ network, April 10, from 10 to 10:30 p. m., Eastern Standard Time; Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen will conclude his sermons on "The Seven Last Words."

The Nation.—In the wake of the floods, Congress was deluged with flood control appropriation bills. Usually members from the Eastern States check these, but now their resistance is low and so an omnibus flood bill calling for $1,000,000,000 is considered possible. On April 1, the Red Cross was caring for 107,329 families. * * * Guy T. Helverding, Commissioner of Internal Revenue, told the Ways and Means Committee that its adaptation of the Roosevelt tax measure was fine as far as it went, but that it stopped $29,000,000 short of the desired goal of $620,000,000. The Committee meanwhile defended the program from business and Republican critics by sharp counter-attack. * * * The trial in Tampa of officers accused of flogging to death a labor organizer proceeded to rouse the passions everyone expected it to. The defense tried to make it a trial of Americanism by alien radicalism. Norman Thomas led the radicals who want to make it a trial of fascism. The Ku Klux Klan is more active in the region than it has been in years. * * * TVA filed requests with Congress for appropriations to build six new dams to cost $144,500,000. If granted, these would bring expenses planned to a total of $329,688,525. * * * The Supreme Court refused to test the new utility law through a case picked by its opponents. The test is expected to come up soon with the Electric Bond and Share case. * * * The NRA was totally liquidated on April 1. George L. Berry, final chief of the agency, told the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems that "the work has only begun." * * * The House passed a bill to enforce a regular listing of all lobbyists. The Senate lobby committee finished its field work which included the seizure of telegrams, and prepared to reconcile its ideas with those of the House. * * * Congress changed the Federal Housing Act, so that the FHA can guarantee real estate remodeling loans above $2,000, the previous top. Now it can guarantee them up to $50,000, which is supposed to encourage improvements in tenement houses.

The Wide World.—That educated automaton, the German people, was almost perfectly efficient in the elections of March 29. Only 542,898 citizens—the non-Aryan is no longer a citizen—took the trouble to write "Nein" on ballots which had no room for that word. The campaign had witnessed sights unparalleled in the history of public opinion. There were moments of nation-wide silence; there were other moments when nobody could hear himself think. One of the most theatrical Hitler discourses advocated peace from the pulpit of the Krupp armament plants, now going full blast. The propagandists insisted that the Nazis were making Germany strong and at the same time paving the way for twenty-five years of peace. * * * The general European response to the German plebiscite was laconic. The major news reported from London was that, despite serious differences of opinion in the Cabinet, the plan for talks between the General Staffs of France, Belgium and Britain would begin in about a week. Care was taken to insist that these conversations were merely "precautionary" and that representatives of the German army might be invited later on. Hope that the Nazis would modify their stand on the Locarno treaties had all but disappeared. It was, however, asserted that Hitler's reply suggested a "moral armistice" along the Rhine under the supervision of an international commission. There was excitement in Prague over the report that German armored cars were stationed close to the Austrian border, and the French press stated that another putsch into Austria was imminent. Interesting were endeavors by the Austrian government to meet the Socialists half way. * * * Italy, smarting under the effect of sanctions and of slow progress in Ethiopia, continued to repudiate the idea of cooperating with the League powers. Mussolini was said to view with favor a closer association with France, but to insist

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upon the lifting of sanctions as a preliminary step. In so far as the African war is concerned, news dispatches indicated little save that a series of air raids on more important Ethiopian hamlets were every-day occurrences. Returning from the front, the New York *Herald Tribune* correspondent expressed the belief that the conquest of Ethiopia would prove a long and expensive undertaking. * * * A number of border incidents along the frontier of Mongolia, notably a battle started on March 31, seem to be caused by the unwillingness of military forces on both sides to keep the peace. Observers hazard the view that the clashes are not liked in Tokyo but that Japanese leaders in Manchukuo think there is no time like the present to proceed with the conquest of Mongolian Asia. * * * The French franc was again in dire straits, when it dipped below the gold export point largely because of the exodus of capital in view of the dangerous international situation. Government steps mitigated but did not cure the evil. Other European gold currencies also fell. But improvement then set in suddenly and most of the ground lost was recovered.

* * * *

Third Parties.—There are always more than two parties in the field on election years, and the number and strength which extra parties will have this fall is now exercising those citizens who consider Roosevelt a conservative. The organization of the Socialist party is split sharply in two factions. The Socialist Left Wing, having worked up momentum away from reformist toward revolutionary Marxism, having split from their conservative colleagues, and being reinforced by recruits from their own Left, do not appear eager for a broader "united front" type of third party. The Right Wing would more logically work into a third party movement. The Communist party, following the same tactic in this country as in France and Spain and elsewhere, is eager for a traditionally American third party movement. The secretary of the party, Earl Browder, takes every opportunity to show how cooperative the Communists wish to be in the formation of a democratic type opposition party. The most important nucleus for a possible national third party exists in the north Middle West. The Minnesota State Farmer-Labor party held its convention last week. Governor Olson was nominated for senator, and he spoke in favor of a third party. The convention as a whole rather hedged, "calling a national conference to explore the possibilities of a national Farmer-Labor ticket in 1936 and in promoting state Farmer-Labor parties. . . ." The sentiment of the convention was by no means averse to President Roosevelt, and many feared that a third party would permit a Republican to beat him. The most important Farmer-Labor planks concerning property are suggested by these quotations: "monopolized industries ultimately will be collectively owned . . . to do everything to promote and encourage private ownership of homes, farms and small businesses."

Educators to Convene.—New York is to play host to the National Catholic Educational Association this year, and extensive plans have been laid to render April 14, 15 and 16 memorable to all the delegates who attend. It is expected that more than 2,000 will be on hand to represent Catholic education in all its branches and undertakings. Bishop John B. Peterson, episcopal chairman of the education department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, will inaugurate the proceedings with a sermon preached at the solemn Mass in St. Patrick's Cathedral, and the first general meeting on the same day will feature an address by Bishop Francis W. Howard, president general of the association. The Waldorf-Astoria Hotel is to be headquarters, and there most of the regular and special sessions during which educators thresh out their problems will be held. If the discussion is as lively as it was last year, every follower of scholastic endeavor will find it worth his while to attend. The convention banquet on April 14, sure to be largely patronized, will bring together many persons active in educational and allied endeavors. It was stated that the speakers would include Bishop Howard, the Reverend George Johnson and the Reverend Edmund A. Walsh, S. J. The chairman of the New York committee is the Reverend William R. Kelly, who can be addressed by those interested at 23 East 51st Street, New York. We may add, in order to convey some impression of the importance of the convention, that there are in the United States at present 10,428 Catholic educational institutions, with 85,809 teachers and more than 2,500,000 pupils and students.

Non-Catholic Religious Activities.—In Philadelphia a non-sectarian Citizens' Good Friday Committee is working for an official city-wide observance of the three hours this year. On Good Friday last year there were three-hour services in 80 percent of the city's churches. The committee sponsored 54 announcements through local radio stations, distributed 25,000 cards to stores, theatres and business houses and conducted an extensive mail campaign among clergymen and business men. As a result all chain meat and grocery stores were closed from noon to three o'clock, mail delivery ceased at noon and trolleys, buses and taxis stopped for one minute at 2:59 p. m. There are reports of similar efforts by Catholics and non-Catholics in Milwaukee, Toledo and San Francisco. * * * At the Lutheran Foreign Missions Conference of North America at St. Paul, Minnesota, March 24 and 25, Reverend M. J. Stolee of St. Paul declared, "Population in non-Christian lands is increasing faster than those who turn to the Saviour." To meet present mission needs he advocated the almost exclusive use of unmarried missionaries, a fuller identification with native life, less elaborate equipment except in strategic centers and better development of native leadership. The conference appointed a committee to recommend legislation that would permit an American missionary to relieve the government of all responsibility toward him in case he wishes to continue his labors in a country which is at war. * * * An Interchurch Committee for Cooperative Education has been organized in Philadelphia to study such questions as cooperative buying, credit unions, church coopera-

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tion, trade unions, agriculture and consumer education. * * * On April 6, Jews throughout the world began the observance of the Passover, which commemorates the exodus of the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt. Orthodox Jews observe this festival for eight days, Reformed Jews for one week.

AORP, Ltd.—The Townsend movement was publicly analyzed by a congressional investigating committee. Dr. Townsend estimated that there are now 7,000 Townsend Clubs with an average membership of 500. He claims 17,500,000 sympathizers. The total income has been $952,000, $350,000 having been collected in dues and club assessments during the last quarter of 1935, and $180,000 during the quarter just passed. Members pay "dime a month" dues through their clubs. The clubs pay an organization assessment of $25 or $12.50. The various organizers who form the clubs work on a commission basis. The investigating committee uncovered no extraordinary payments to officers; Robert E. Clements, who was secretary and chief business dynamo up to April 1, getting (with his wife) $14,110 and generous expenses during 1935. Mr. Clements resigned his position during the investigation because, according to Dr. Townsend, he disapproved of plans to decentralize control of the movement and because he strongly opposed the Doctor's leaning toward a third party movement away from his own policy of "boring from within" in the manner of the Anti-Saloon League. In the midst of the fire, Congressman John S. McGroarty, recognized legislative leader of the Townsend forces, broke sharply with Dr. Townsend. He claimed that the new Sheridan Downey plan to finance the old-age pensions, by the issuance of tax-exempt bonds is a clear repudiation of the original and proper plan to finance them by taxing business transactions. Perhaps the most interesting remark made during the hearings was that of Mr. Clements, co-founder of the whole movement: "I have not studied economics to any extent."

Nordic Religion.—What is the Nordic faith? Publication No. 35 by the Friends of Europe (St. Stephen's House, London) summarizes the "Outline of a German-Nordic Religion" written by Herr Fischer-Dodeleben as "the fruit of eight years of labor." The new creed does not have dogmas. It is based on "themes," which the author says are 25 in number. The list follows, and the reader will please bear in mind that according to Herr Fischer-Dodeleben Nos. 5, 8, 15, 16 and 19 are those "without a mastery of which . . . it is idle to speak of a German-Nordic religion." (1) The chief culture races of the earth and their religions. (2) The Aryan race. (3) The history of the settlement of the German soil. (4) Racial elements in the German people. (5) The religion of the Germans. (6) Ancient Nordic and ancient German sagas. (7) The German world of fairy tales. (8) Jesus. (9) Syrian-Etruscan modification of the Figure of Jesus. (10) The Bible. (11) Arius, Wulfila and the religion of the German migration period. (12) History of our later conversion and its evidence in customs and language. (13) The papacy and the religious wars. (14) The great "heretics" before Luther and their ideas. (15) Master Ekkehart of Hochheim. (16) Luther. (17) The great ones of our people and their religious persuasions. (18) German art and science in relation to religion. (19) Alfred Rosenberg and his "Mythus of the 20th Century." (20) The German family bond and feeling (*Sippengefühl*). (21) Rural and urban family centers. (22) Ancient myths of immortality of the culture peoples and our own immortality. (23) Religious lyrics and music. (24) Regulations for ministers and their congregations. (25) Christian welfare work for the people (*Volkswohlfahrt*). The ultimate goal is thus described by Herr Fischer-Dodeleben: "Wherever Germans live, in Europe or any part of the world, they will share the same political and religious outlook on life and their unerring race-feeling will prevent them from becoming bastards, a cultural manure and worthless parasites of an alien nation."

The Thinking Motor.—What may prove to be an intensely interesting, and in time very helpful, advance on the frontier of science was reported at the recent session of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology. It paralleled somewhat the earlier, and simpler, experiments by which constant mental activity, with varying degrees of memory, during sleep was proved, and it follows the electro-chemical postulate of mental activity which has more and more been identified with the work of Dr. Crile. Scientists of the physiology department of the University of Illinois described in their report to the biology societies the hooking up of a galvanometer to the nervous system of an animal. When the animal was conscious, an electrical current two- to three-millionths of an ampere was detected flowing from the nerves to the brain. When the animal was unconscious, under ether, the current flowed in the reverse direction. As the anesthesia wore off, the current gradually reversed itself again until it was flowing from nerve to brain. The summary of the findings was: "There seems to be a threshold potential of the cortex below which the animal loses consciousness and above which it regains consciousness. It is known that active tissue is electro-negative while inactive tissue is electro-positive. The electro-negative cortex (seat of the intelligence in the upper front layer of the brain) is active and conscious while the electro-positive cortex is inactive and unconscious. Hence, it would seem, consciousness or unconsciousness is a matter of electrical potential of the cerebral cortex, and this in turn is undoubtedly dependent upon the balance between loss and gain of electric charges passing to and from the brain over the nerves."

Pickwick Centenary.—At nine o'clock on the morning of March 30, a coachman cracked his whip and a Commodore coach drawn by a team of horses started out from the site of the Golden Cross Hotel in the Strand, London, for Rochester, thirty-one miles away. In the driver's seat was Alfred Rust, a schoolmaster, as the immortal Pickwick, and other worthies in the coach included modern counterparts of Augustus Snodgrass, Mr.

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Tupman, Alfred Jingle and Nathaniel Winkle. Four hours later the historic vehicle drew up before the Bull Hotel at Rochester followed by an automobile procession of 300 admirers. After a luncheon at the Guildhall the party spent the afternoon visiting various parts of Rochester made famous by Dickens. Another high spot of the week's festivities brought to life scenes from "A Tale of Two Cities," "Bleak House," "Christmas Carol" and "The Cricket on the Hearth," reenacted by such artists as Dame Sybil Thorndike, Ben Greet, Martin Harvey and Seymour Hicks. This all-star matinee was arranged by Chapman and Hall, publishers, who in 1836 contracted with Charles Dickens, then twenty-four, to furnish for monthly publication a series called "The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club" to accompany a series of humorous illustrations by Robert Seymour. At one time William Makepeace Thackeray was considered for the post of comic artist, but Dickens refused to work with him on this project. After the introduction of Sam Weller in the fifth number, "The Pickwick Papers" were a tremendous success and Mr. Pickwick still numbers his followers by the millions.

* * * *

Agricultural Quandary.—During the week no one seemed to predict a bright future for farming except Wall Street buyers of implement shares. The National Committee on Rural Social Planning arranged a conference in Washington where everybody attacked the local administration of AAA, especially in the South, and where the limitations of a policy of restriction were emphasized, and where share-croppers and tenants were shown to be hardly benefited by federal plans. Conditions of farm laborers were indicated by the fact that their unions were said to be attacked for demanding $1 for a ten-hour day with $.15 an hour for over-time. In Congress, Senator Vandenberg asked for a list of beneficiaries who got over $10,000 a year in AAA payments. He strongly hinted that certain banks and sugar corporations received anywhere from $700,000 to over $900,000. There was stiff opposition in the House to increasing the capitalization of the Commodity Credit Corporation from $3,000,000 to $100,000,000, from Republicans who claimed it would develop into a new Federal Farm Board. Even Secretary Wallace gloomily predicted a glut in farm markets by 1937. The new farm program cannot attack the problem directly. Ordinarily about 300,000,000 acres are planted in cash, soil-depleting crops, and about 100,000,000 acres in soil-building crops. Last year the old AAA diverted around 31,000,000 acres, and the diversion will probably be accomplished this year too. But last year, AAA could say from what crops diversion had to be made, while this year it cannot. It can persuade a farmer to conserve so much of his land, but it cannot do it by persuading him to cut down on specific crops. Secretary Wallace claims to be optimistic about only the first and third of the following three objectives of the new farm law: "First, to conserve the soil itself . . . ; second, to reestablish and maintain farm income at such levels as will permit national recovery to continue; third, to protect consumers by assuring adequate supplies of food now and in the future."

In Quest of Economy.—President Roosevelt's Committee on Government Competition with Private Enterprise recommended, March 26, that the government should "protect and promote the economic activities of its citizens, not . . . supplant them." It also maintained that "government expenditures will be reduced and revenue increased if the federal government withdraws from competition with private enterprise" except where required by national defense, conservation of national resources, research for industrial development or public health and safety beyond the resources of private industry and by the failure of private enterprise to provide services necessary for the general welfare. This is quite in line with the investigation of government agencies to be carried on by committees appointed by the President, the Senate and the House. Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia started the movement, but Mr. Roosevelt, in appointing his committee of experts and calling for consolidation and economizing in government activities, was carrying out certain campaign promises. He was also following his predecessors Theodore Roosevelt, Taft, Harding, Coolidge and Hoover; yet despite numerous gestures from the White House in the past government activity has grown steadily. The New Deal speeded up the process, creating 54 new agencies and 250,000 new jobs and increasing the yearly payroll, on the basis of figures for January, 1936, to $1,496,119,056. The chief obstacle to consolidation and economy is that the necessary laying off of government employees is opposed to terrific political pressure.

Business Improves, but . . .—With Western Union earnings about six times what they were a year ago and building of all kinds doubled in the first quarter of 1936 compared to the first quarter of 1935, business is, according to the *Magazine of Wall Street,* to say the least, and thus avoid controversy, picking up. General business activity during the quarter just ended was 13 percent higher than a year ago, and, if the indications are borne out, it will be 18 to 20 percent better during the current quarter. This will bring business activity to a higher level than that reached in the fabulous 1929, though speculation is not what it was then, nor the day and night press work on elegantly engraved pieces of paper which promised much and were sold and resold for fancy prices, nor employment. The steel industry is operating at 61 percent of capacity, compared with 46.8 percent a year ago. These figures do not reveal the whole story by a long way because, in the interim of the depression, continuous strip production of steel has been inaugurated in the great mills, increasing potential production over the old techniques by as much as 700 percent without corresponding increases in employment or other overhead. Telephoning is some 20 percent ahead of a year ago; cash farm income is 8 percent improved; railroad loadings up 8 percent and theatre income is estimated to be 25 to 30 percent better. Still, 12,500,000 men and women are unemployed, according to the American Federation of Labor.

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The Play and Screen

Idiot's Delight

IN THEATRICAL variety and unexpectedness of effect there is no living English-speaking dramatist the superior of Robert E. Sherwood. It is rare to find one of his plays which does not appeal to more than one class of people; most of them appeal to five or six. His plays are a veritable grab-bag of comedy-tragedy-melodrama-farce with always a seasoning of serious meaning. Mr Sherwood knows that the public wants at least to think it thinks, and that it is well to appeal to this somewhat naif belief. It is good for the box-office, and perhaps for his own conscience; for Mr. Sherwood's conscience certainly tells him that when he wants to be he can be something far better than a mere confectioner or thrill-provider. Unlike most Broadway playwrights, Mr. Sherwood has both beliefs and feelings, and unlike the propaganda brethren, he has a subtle mind and a sensitivity of impression which makes him at home in the regions of the ironic. Moreover, he knows the world, the great world as well as the work-a-day one. When, for instance, he writes about Europeans, they are Europeans and not abstractions conceived by a mind which has never been east of the Hudson River; and he can write equally veritably about gunmen, and cowboys, and hoofers, and chorus-girls. And yet with this admirable equipment he has never written a whole play worthy of his abilities. Is it distrust of his public, fear of failure, or some twist of mind which refuses to allow him to think a thing through? In all his plays there are magnificent scenes, even complete acts, but never that indomitable unifying spirit which is the sign and seal of great art.

"Idiot's Delight" is an admirable example of Mr. Sherwood's virtues and defects. It is laid in a hotel in the Italian Tyrol on the outbreak of a great war. Gathered there are a German scientist, a French munitions manufacturer, a French Communist, two young English honeymooners, some Italian officers, a bogus Russian countess, and an American vaudeville hoofer with six dancing girls. The scientist as soon as war breaks out abandons his cancer cure to make poison gases; the French Communist is shot for denouncing the Italians for bombing Paris and shouting "Vive la France"; the young Englishman, hating war, goes back to fight; the munitions magnate abandons his Russian companion because she denounces his business. It is in these figures that Mr. Sherwood is at his best; in them he shows his hatred for war, and shows it eloquently. Yet it is precisely in his two leading figures, his Russian adventuress and his hoofer, that he is artistically false. These figures, too, denounce war, but amusing as the hoofer is, we never can believe in him, while the countess comes preciously near burlesque. And the final scene, with the two of them singing "Onward Christian Soldiers" while the French rain bombs on the hotel and everyone else has fled to the cellar, is hokum of a peculiarly annoying kind.

"Idiot's Delight" is undoubtedly one of the hits of the year, for in it there is not only tragedy, melodrama, comedy and farce, but musical comedy as well. All will find in it things to their liking, but the judicious will regret that with the gold there is so much brass. Alfred Lunt is amusing as the hoofer, though perhaps Lynn Fontanne is not at her best as the countess. But the smaller parts are all superbly done, especially by Edward Raquello, Francis Compton, George Meader, Sidney Greenstreet and Richard Whorf. (At the Shubert Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

Things to Come

ALEXANDER KORDA'S British filmization of the World of the Future holds true to H. G. Wells's extraordinarily serious preachment for the abolition of war through a new world order of technological perfection. As such the production does not have great value, although it does have some special significance at this time of threatening war clouds over Europe. Taken, however, as an experiment in advanced mechanics applied to the art of picture making, Mr. Korda's contribution in "Things to Come" is enormously courageous, in parts awesome in its skilful imaginative fulfilment of the author's hobby of prying into the future.

The score over the issue is even at the end, pacifists gaining their point in the first chapters when Mr. Wells's impressions of the devastating effect of the next world war on civilization are reproduced. But his guarantee for peace and plenty becomes too involved, too meticulous, too rapid in its operation to win support of all mankind. It is the medium of mechanical contraption and the boring pushbutton. Such huge portions of machinery and gears, stone and steel make human beings bloodless, dwarf their existence, stifle their esthetic senses. Individual characterization is not, in fact, a feature of the film. Dialog, as stipulated in the script, is unrealistic and declaimed rather than spoken. It is not a life of contentment, this new era of Wells's, but of tension.

"Pax Mundi—Wings over the World" are strong-willed, scientist-controlled airmen who set out to redeem civilization and restore law and order. In their new world men live in semi-subterranean cities, by conditioned air, perpetual sunshine and symmetry. Helicopters rise and descend from public squares. Telephones are mere wristwatch-like gadgets worn without any wiring connection. Televisors spread messages to the whole world at one time. Disease has been abolished. Giant guns send men to the moon in rockets. Sidewalks move. Glass elevators ascend in glass tubes to the sky. Leisure is plentiful.

There are abundant thrills in the war scenes with hundreds of bombing planes filling the air, tearing up cities and buildings by their roots, but it is with the pictures of the future that miracles begin, the colossal taking form.

The merit of the spectacle resurrects that old description, "It must be seen to be appreciated." There can be no criticism as a piece of craftsmanship. The scale is as enormous as the method is convincing. Especially commendable is the photography. The music, an original suite by Arthur Bliss, is important. It supports many sequences, fulfilling at times the same function as in a mimed play. (Generally released in America on April 24.)

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

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Communications

THE CATHOLIC NOVEL

Somerset, Ohio.

TO the Editor: It has been said time and again that in her "Death Comes for the Archbishop" and "Shadows on the Rock" Willa Cather achieved that elusive something—the Catholic novel. Now, just how did Miss Cather succeed where so many others have failed? Perhaps an answer to this question might be of positive assistance to the Catholic novelist and discourage somewhat much useless discussion of the question.

That Miss Cather had no intention of writing precisely a Catholic novel in her "Death Comes for the Archbishop" is evident from her letter to THE COMMONWEAL (November 23, 1927). Actually to have succeeded in doing so was rather in the nature of an accident and—we might well imagine—might have been a surprise to herself. In this very fact is contained a fundamental lesson which has been crystallized into a simple truth by Mr. Richard Dana Skinner. "The real artist," he says, "is seldom fully conscious of the entire import of his creative efforts."

Now, let us turn to our Catholic novelist and his noble intentions. It would seem that he sits down to his work with a single thought uppermost in his mind; he is about to write a *Catholic* novel. After mentally arranging his material—being always supremely conscious of what he is about to do—he casts about and decides upon either one of two points of view. If he has read and wept over the cloyingly pietistic novels of what purports to be Catholic life he may determine to shock his readers after the manner of Sinclair Lewis and yet always maintain his stand on the side of the angels. On the other hand, should he fear to shock or should he fail to appreciate the essential human nature of his characters, he will follow in the tradition of the old-fashioned, dehumanized mode of hagiographical writing. In neither case does he succeed in producing something of a permanent literary and artistic worth and for no other reason than that he is too conscious of what he thinks is expected from him. Miss Cather gives her definition of the novel as "merely a work of imagination in which a writer tries to present the experiences and emotions of a group of people by the light of his own." Our Catholic novelist—unfortunately for himself and his cause—does not see things quite so simply. He insists upon presenting "the experiences and emotions of a group of people by the light of what he thinks should be his own." In general, the result is that they are very unnatural and out of contact with that reality for which our religion is the most powerful source of spiritual strength.

More than eight years ago Willa Cather all unconsciously uttered a challenge to the Catholic novelist. In explaining the gradual genesis of her "Death Comes for the Archbishop" she says: "During the twelve years that followed my first year in New Mexico and Arizona I went back as often as I could, and the story of the Church and the Spanish missionaries was always what most interested me; but I hadn't the most remote idea of trying to write about it. I was working on things of a very different nature, and any story of the Church in the Southwest was certainly the business of some Catholic writer and not mine at all."

In conclusion it might be suggested that the whole of Miss Cather's letter be read and especially in conjunction with the article "Willa Cather as a Critic" by Camille McCole in *America* (January 11, 1936).

REV. MARK BARRON, O.P.

IGNATIUS CARDINAL TAPPOUNI

Antigonish, Nova Scotia.

TO the Editor: Your readers will probably find the following information useful. Most of it is culled from *Al-Bashir* (November 23, 1935), a semi-daily Arabic paper, edited by the Jesuit Fathers of St. Joseph University, Beirut, Lebanon.

The last Oriental cardinal was Monsignor Anthony Hassun, an Armenian, 1880, and the first, back in the fifteenth century, Monsignor John Bassarion, a Greek Catholic, a champion of unity among the Oriental churches.

But *Eastern Churches Quarterly* (volume 1, number 1, page 24) says: "The last cardinal of Eastern rite was Sylvester Sembratovich, Ruthenian Archbishop of Lwow," who was appointed in 1895. These statements may be reconciled by assuming that *Al-Bashir* had in mind prelates of the Oriental rites in the Near East. In its yearly almanac it does not include the Ruthenian rite among the Oriental rites.

Ignatius Cardinal Tappouni I, Syrio-Catholic Patriarch, was born at Mosul on November 3, 1879, educated at the Dominican school at Mosul, and ordained to the priesthood, 9 November, 1902; he taught at his alma mater for six years, was secretary to the Apostolic Delegate to Mesopotamia, 1908, consecrated Bishop of Suruj, January 19, 1913, and appointed patriarchal Vicar-General, the same date, for Mardin. During the World War, he turned the patriarchal residence into an asylum and hospital for the needy and the ill. In 1918, he was thrown into jail on some trumped-up charge by a Turkish war lord, stood his trial before a military court, and suffered many indignities and privations at the hands of the Turks until 15 September of the same year when he was freed.

In 1919, he was appointed Patriarchal Vicar-General for the Archdiocese of Aleppo, and consecrated Archbishop for that diocese 24 February, 1921. On 24 June, 1929, he was elected Patriarch of Antioch for his rite, succeeding Ephraim II Rahmani, was confirmed in conclave July 16, and invested with the sacred pallium on August 16 of that year.

A correspondent from Beirut adds, that the reason for his appointment is the Pope's solicitude for the adherents of the Syrio-Catholic Rite, who number only about 30,000 souls. The Catholicity of this rite goes back only to the seventeenth century. It was converted from the Jacobite heresy chiefly at the hands of François Piquet, French Consul at Aleppo. The first Patriarch after the conversion (reversion) was Monsignor Andrew Akhijian, who

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was educated at the Maronite College, Rome, going thereafter to Lebanon and residing with the Maronite Patriarch, John Safrawi. Akhijian was consecrated Bishop of Aleppo by the Patriarch at the request of the aforementioned M. Piquet in 1656, and was elected patriarch after the death of the Patriarch Sham'un who was a Jacobite.

ANTHONY TRABOULSEE.

"THE INFORMER"

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: Referring to Father Boyle's letter in your issue of March 6, it is evident that the Legion of Decency condemned "The Informer" on moral grounds, yet the burden of Father Boyle's criticism of the film is because of what to him is its historical deficiency. He cites (1) the £20 fee paid the informer, (2) the fare to America, (3) the Republican court, and (4) the recital of the rosary. In the canons of what makes literary or dramatic creation points (1), (2) and (3) simply do not matter. As to point (4), I have attended many wakes and no doubt Father Boyle has attended more. I should say the rosary recital was mumbled, rather than jumbled, and not at all irreverent. I am also surprised that Father Boyle strains at those four gnats to swallow the camel, and that as a priest he overlooked the main premise. For "The Informer" is a study in conscience, or fear; and it is in the portrayal of that fact that McLaglen reached the heights of artistry.

Now let me add for the benefit of the argument that I was in Ireland in the days of the Black and Tans. I even had the "fun" of being thought a spy in a situation I have not puzzled out to this day. I was in the west where the Republican feeling ran high, and where "The Soldier's Song" was worth a jail sentence. I knew what those lads thought when they sang the couplet "Some have come from a land beyond the wave." But I also know that many an Irish housewife, for no other reason than hospitality, often treated the Black and Tan lads to cake and milk when these latter took free-day hikes cross-country. I sat in railway compartments with them, blowing my cigarette smoke in their faces (when I knew they were out of fags) because I had any Celt's native resentment to what they stood for. Yet looking back at them now I see they were no whit different than CCC lads here—a problem of readjustment, however damnable that may be.

Therefore I am not speaking with any pro-English bias when I take Father Boyle to task. He is within his rights as a Celt in questioning the glorification of a rather disagreeable hero, but all the same I believe the Legion of Decency made a mistake in placing "The Informer" in the Class C list. If the Legion wishes to place films under an interdict, let it be such films as intelligent Catholics can validate the banning reasons therefor to questioning outsiders. Resort to the time-worn clichés of "Celtic womanhood," etc., proves nothing except a suspicion that such resorters feel the passing of the plusheen-panted Olcotts a tragedy of the first water. Even as a study in fear the interdict against "The Informer" as unwise for children to view cannot hold water, for children and many young people find the fear motif rather funny in a story.

In quoting Mr. Churchill's remark in the *Times*, "As for 'The Informer,' Hollywood did not know we [newspaper men] made it," that is susceptible of an entirely different meaning than Father Boyle gives it. It is my impression that of all recent Hollywood films "The Informer" was least interfered with in production. In short, the director had a free hand, and if the newspaper men were alert to the artistic success of that action, more power to them.

It sums up to simply this: Is Catholic criticism in this country to be Catholic or Puritan? Because, if we are in the Puritan tradition, Sigrid Undset's works will never be filmed in this country; and Michelangelo's Sistine frescoes would never have been painted.

T. O'DONNELL.

THE EMPLOYER

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editor: Recently, the Catholic Conference on Industrial Problems held a meeting in Chicago which was notable for the absence of employers both on the program and in the audience. The meeting had been well publicized. Employers had ample notice and invitation. In addition, a dozen employers were asked to speak. Only three accepted, and one of the three, acting only as chairman, did not present the employer's point of view.

The absence of employers is to be greatly regretted and occasioned disturbed questioning on the part of employing groups who did not know how earnest an attempt had been made to secure employer participation. But as the two-day session wore on, the undersigned came to an appreciation of at least one reason why employers both absented themselves from the sessions and declined to speak. The atmosphere was unsympathetic. They and they alone were held responsible for the ills of the depression. They were dealt with so harshly that it would have been painful to them had they attended.

Let it be granted that employers have many sins on their shoulders. But if it be desired to convert them, to get them to enter sympathetically and enthusiastically into efforts to rectify present conditions, the approach will have to be radically different from what it was at the Chicago conference. The Church has two arguments for the sinner: it threatens punishment, and it offers heavenly reward. In other words, there are both negative and positive arguments. The negative argument for the employer was overstressed in Chicago, the positive, rarely mentioned. The employers were not bidden to join hands with others in rectifying conditions. Three or four of the speakers were fair-minded and presented a balanced point of view. The others damned and denounced. Certainly the audience must have gained the impression that the employer was hopeless and would yield only to force.

The writer submits that the atmosphere was not calculated to do the greatest good. If it be continued, there can be little expectation, in Chicago at least, of hearty employer participation in these conferences.

E. J. MEHREN.

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Books

The European Past

A Political and Cultural History of Modern Europe: Volume II, A Century of Predominantly Industrial Society, 1830-1935, *by Carlton J. H. Hayes. New York: The Macmillan Company.* $4.50.

THE WRITING of a textbook in history is a difficult and responsible task, in these days an especially difficult and responsible one. The writer cannot address an audience in any important sense homogeneous; teachers of the most varied background, training and capacity will attempt to interpret his work to an even more varied lot of students. Moreover, the historian writing in the 1930's must be aware that the old nineteenth-century confidence in liberalism and progress can no longer give structural form to his generalizations; his audience, however, will be very diversely aware of the disappearance of that confidence, and very diversely able to appreciate the extent to which his generalizations have attained a new structural form. Finally, the present fashion in the teaching of history has turned so violently against the old history as "past politics" that it can only be described as "past everything." As the late Albert Mathiez maliciously remarked, the new historian must be a scientist, sociologist, economist, statistician, philosopher, man of letters, journalist, "bref, un Américain."

There is little doubt that Professor Hayes's new "Political and Cultural History of Modern Europe," now completed by the publication of volume II, will become what his earlier "Political and Social History" has long been, by all odds the best book in its field. This is a new book, as the author explains, and not a mere reworking of the older book. The results of historical research in the last twenty years might well have been incorporated in a new edition of the older book; the results of what has happened in our world since the outbreak of the war to end wars has been a new spirit of the age, and to incorporate that nothing less than a new book would do.

Dr. Hayes has answered the demand for encyclopedic knowledge by being encyclopedic. Within these 1,200 pages the eager student will find a record of everything man has done in the last hundred years. The book is an admirable piece of book-making; maps, illustrations and typography are excellent. The intelligent general reader, the able student, especially if he has the right kind of teacher, will find here an introduction to a dozen fascinating worlds. The duller student, especially if he be handicapped by a poor memory, may be bewildered rather than fascinated. That, however, seems inevitable in an educational system like our own, which makes so little effort to sort the sheep and the goats.

It is not that Professor Hayes provides no guidance through the maze of facts he has assembled. On the contrary, the great virtue of this book is that it does have shape and pattern, without being dogmatic or old-fashioned. Not so long ago the nineteenth century was very clear to most of us; it was a dramatic struggle between

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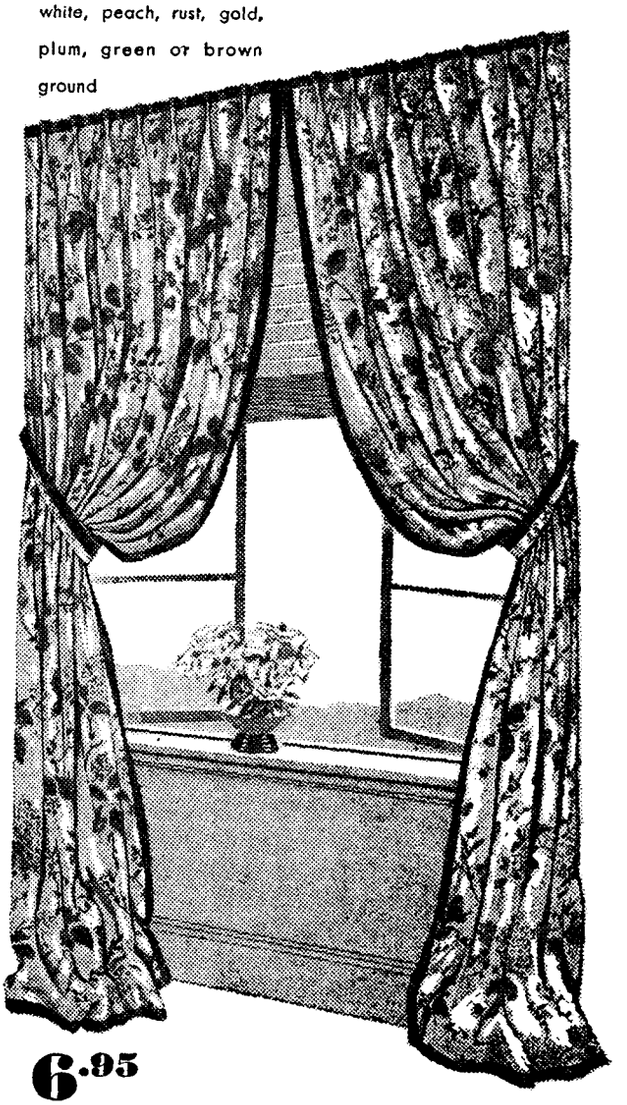

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Education and Willa Cather

In next week's issue Willa Cather writes of the problem of the author and the social question, presenting some charming and provocative thoughts on "Escapism"; C. C. Miltner makes an interesting and original plea for "Simplicity in Education"; in "Educated Mothers" Helen M. McCadden discusses the relationship between higher education and bringing up a family; Hilaire Belloc calls for a honestly factual rewriting of English History that will necessarily explain "how the disruption of Europe took place in the sixteenth century." Articles like these are typical of THE COMMONWEAL.

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Good (liberalism, nationalism, democracy) and Evil (monarchy, paternalism, feudalism). These principles, of course, moved in men. At the very outset of the century, Evil as Prince Metternich seemed triumphant; at its end, Good, somewhat oddly symbolized by the more active members of the Fabian Society, seemed about to clinch the victory. Professor Hayes's very first edition had no such simplicities as these, but in the present book he achieves a very remarkable superiority over them. Words like "liberalism," "nationalism," "democracy," still serve to tie events together—as indeed they must—but Dr. Hayes has refined all the elements of the cliché out of them. (Incidentally, this is another reason why the book will trouble the duller students; at a certain level of intelligence, it seems likely that education must deal in clichés.)

Another merit, closely allied to this awareness of the complexity of the last century, this ability to criticize the last century by using its own terminology more skilfully, is that Professor Hayes knows what is alive and what is dead in its—and our—concerns. The old "warfare between science and theology," for instance, he shows definitely to be dead; it never was a warfare between science and theology, but between a particular philosophical doctrine and theology. Nor is he fooled by the Eddingtons and the Jeans. Without mentioning names, he disposes neatly of the "scientific rediscovery of God." Similarly in his treatment of Socialism and nationalism he succeeds in making clear how far men were fighting over words and how far they were fighting over something less mutable than words. The chapters on the World War and on the Russian, German and Italian post-war experiments are, like the earlier chapters, admirably clear and well-balanced. The author has no illusions; but he is certainly not, in the vulgar sense, "disillusioned." On his very last page, he warns his readers that in historical perspective we may not be where Spengler and the other pessimists think we are. If he clearly finds that much of contemporary culture belongs to chaos, he is by no means dogmatically certain we shall not win through to cosmos.

One final comment. The passages on letters, art and music are only imperfectly integrated with the rest of the book. This is not because of any obvious lack of interest or sensitivity on Professor Hayes's part; indeed his judgments on individual artists are often penetrating, and always interesting—on Nietzsche, for instance, or on Thomas Hardy. The difficulty is apparent in all the newer history textbooks. The esthetic side of man's achievement comes out badly as compared with the political, social, economic, religious and philosophical sides. When, as with Mr. H. E. Barnes, the author is esthetically blind, the result is incredibly bad. Dr. Hayes has come out less badly than any writer the present reviewer knows, but even he has not quite brought it off. The reason for this common failure is probably the old one of falling between two stools: between the study of art and letters for themselves, and the study of their sociological implications. Moreover, either study requires space, and to compress both into part of a textbook is fatal.

CRANE BRINTON.

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English Saints

Saint John Fisher, by Vincent McNabb, O.P. New York: Sheed and Ward. $1.75.

John Fisher and Thomas More: Two English Saints, by Richard Lawrence Smith. New York: Sheed and Ward. $2.50.

THE SHORT book by Father Vincent McNabb about Saint John is a sort of album of historic snapshots of the Bishop of Rochester. It is not a full consecutive biography nor a rounded picture of the times: it seeks a poetic type of impression, the full, integrated realization of the subject to be conveyed in chunks, as directly as possible. There is a frank didacticism in the work, and concentration on a few things the author particularly wants to teach. The reader will likely notice especially how very British is Saint John. Also, the manner of emphasis on the poverty of the cardinal and his humble union with his people almost reaches rough censure. Throughout, Father McNabb attempts to underscore the emotional, human and pathetic appeal of the saint's life, lost as it can be behind the rare quality of his friend, Saint Thomas More, and exhibited more subtly as it was, in the dutiful and traditional life of a teaching bishop.

The dual biography by Richard Lawrence Smith fits into a disconcerting number of categories. It is a semi-official work of the Vice-Rector of the English College in Rome, approved by the Congregation of Rites for distribution to Church and State officials at the time of the canonization. It purposes to emphasize especially the personal holiness of the two men. All this makes it sound definitely formidable for readers who have small confidence in the pious side of their natures. But if they fear being offended by a glossing pietism, or bored by a dull recital of abstracted virtues, or nauseated by an unreal presentation of the problems of men—even saints, because it is a book explicitly about holiness—they will, I think, be disarmed of their absurd attitude and surprised. This history has a hypnotic quality that can fascinate many who are unused to lives of the saints.

It is not a work of original scholarship, but an admirable critical summary of the best scholarship on the Reformation. It is charged with an impartial interest in what happened, in who these men were, and with a steady interest in good. An overwhelming amount of good is found in those two saints. The enormous desirability of their virtues and the seductive grace of their characters show how successfully the biographer has pictured saintliness. Undoubtedly Father Smith has emphasized sanctity, and he has shown it in rarely real fashion in the midst of a historical time as a whole. The sanctity is not pushed before the reader; the milieu in which the saints acted is clearly developed; the period is pictured and the reader definitely desires to look on these two men of the period. The life of Henry's England is brought up, and the saints, the most vital forces, receive somewhat their due.

The author writes intelligently as historian, and because of the history, as hagiographer. And Saint John Fisher and Saint Thomas More were unusually

MONSIGNOR SHEEN

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attractive historical figures and saints to write about. The book, possibly slightly too formal and somewhat dangerously dependent on a reader's mood to appeal to everybody all the time, comes much nearer than is generally conceded possible to a unity of good literary, historical and devotional reading.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

Toward Wisdom

Greek Ideals and Modern Life, by R. W. Livingstone. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. $2.00.

THE CONTENTS and style of this slender volume of happy scholarship are supple, strong and exciting. The author's theme is that Greek studies are "indispensable to the life of our civilization." There is no falsely exalted approach to the classics in these pages, no logomachy. Because the "chief weakness" of our age is lack of a definite view of life, the Greek viewpoint of conviction energetically expressing itself is analyzed, and put together again, as a way for our floundering age to gather itself out of the mire of contemporary isms. In his arguments the author has achieved the power of restraint and the beauty of proportion of his beloved Greek humanism. Admitting the Greek process had many flaws, his plea, nevertheless, is for the study and absorption of the classics to stir men's minds and hearts to the old search for the wise pattern of life.

A first section discourses brilliantly, with wit and opportune sarcasm, on the attitude toward Greek studies in England from the Renaissance to the present. The richness and deficiencies of the Greeks' ideal, with the quest of this ideal in human life, is stressed in the chapter on "Greek Humanism." The author pursues the application of this ideal in Greek politics and economics. He stresses candidly the "greatness" of Greek civilization, for, as he says clearly, "it may be misleading as well as unprofitable to catalog elaborately the vices of a people." In Professor Livingstone's pages the theory and the facts of Greek life become anew a challenge to our modern civilization.

Part Five is a valuable section, with its clever analogy between the age of Plato and our twentieth century. In both eras the weird confusion of intellectual uncertainty forced the luxation of traditional belief. The crises of our day, as of Plato's age, are due to a pseudo-scientific criticism of religion and morals, and to the shock of a great war.

For Catholic readers the last section, "Christianity and Hellenism," will be stimulating. On the relation of Christianity to Hellenism the author recounts two extreme views, and adopts a third: "Christianity is neither a cancellation of nor a declension from Hellenism but a devlopment and completion of it; . . . it enlarged the Greek conception of man, defined more fully the idea of God, and emphasized more justly the place of religion in life. This has been the view of the Church."

This is an admirable book. It never lapses into artificialities.

DANIEL S. RANKIN.

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One Omen

The New Immoralities: Clearing the Way for a New Ethics, by Porter Sargent. Published by the author, Boston, Mass. $2.00.

MR. SARGENT is the director of a bureau in Boston which advises parents about private schools, and advises private schools about themselves. He has published many a handbook of schools and of summer camps. He describes himself as a philosophic liberal, and in this book, which is being sensationally featured by Boston book stores, he airs his views on ethics.

The book is an incoherent collection of aphorisms on conduct, apparently distilled from a mixture of nineteenth-century "scientific" naturalism and a sophomoric dash of Nietzsche and Kant. Mr. Sargent finds that the race is fettered by chains forged by dead hands, that loving parents and teachers have filled us with the "rubbish" of the Jewish moral code, particularly in matters of sex. He finds that the old maxims of "duty," "truth," "morals" and the like not only stifle human progress, but are responsible for all of the ills of the world, notably the Great War. He finds that our notions of "evil" are subjective, that they do not exist for the scientific mind of the psychiatrist and the psychoanalyst.

His case is made by an amateurish jumble of anthropology and history. He repeats the well-worn analogy between our "tabus" and those of primitive races. On the historical side he finds that we Nordics were a manly, lusty people, with no nonsensical restraints of sex, and that Greco-Roman civilization was likewise uninhibited in such matters, being devoted to the cult of "beauty." The personification of this devotion, one gathers from fond repetition, was Sappho. But along came an insignificant desert tribe, the Jews, with a preposterous set of desert tabus, and somehow it got the upper hand, metamorphosed in Christianity, in the decline of the Empire.

The ignorance of the author is profound, in logic as well as in history. He seems impressed by the Categorical Imperative, which he interprets as an esthetic ideal. He obviously does not understand Kant at all, however lovingly he quotes him.

The book is simply a new and more amateurish popularization of the more youthful outbursts of Professor Dewey and Bertrand Russell, not to mention Mr. Mencken. It is written without a scintilla of the intelligence of any of these men. In support of one point the author quotes Professor W. E. Hocking of Harvard, whom he cannot possibly understand, for Mr. Hocking is a most distinguished enemy of this kind of "ethical" nonsense.

In crowning ridiculousness, he quotes Aristotle's well-known dictum on the limits to knowledge set by sense-experience, and attempts to use this as a support for a dynamic ethics. His logical ineptness is apparent from his failure to realize that the ills of the world result from abuses, from the non-observance of its traditional ethics, because he gives no indication of how the mass of men would be led to observe his new scheme, or prevented from starting world wars in the face of it.

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Nazi Spies

The Brown Network. Introduction by the Earl of Listowel. New York: Knight Publications. $3.00.

THE AUTHORS have tried to provide a detailed account of Nazi spy activities throughout the world. They succeed in proving that a veritable army of propagandists, stool-pigeons and snoopers are employed in at least a score of countries, paralleling in a measure the network of Moscow agents. The most impressive chapter has to do with the kidnaping of Berthold Jacob, pacifist journalist, whose fate so interested the Swiss government that he was rescued from the concentration camp. Impressive sketches of events in eastern European countries might well make every reader ponder. But the book as a whole, especially the section concerned with the United States, lacks coherence and completeness.

Detective Science

Crime's Nemesis, by Luke S. May. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

IT WOULD be too much to expect every criminal and potential criminal to read Mr. May's book. Nevertheless it would provide excellent obligatory reading in all penal institutions. Where fear of consequences may act as a deterrent, "Crime's Nemesis" would add new terrors to deliberations of wrongdoers with its elaboration of the odds against them. For the book, besides its mention of long-known methods, explains those multitudinous aids which science has brought to crime detection. Reading of these one becomes convinced there can be no clueless crime. Science has gone beyond the more obvious tell-tales; today dust, hair, fibers, feathers, twigs, fur, and many similar trivial objects have become esoteric links in the pursuit of justice. The geologist, zoologist, chemist, psychologist, pathologist, radiologist engineer and all expert craftsmen are called upon to play parts. It should be important for every law enforcement agency to study methods presented here, for the unsolved crime, where honesty has been employed, can largely be explained by ignorance of the many and new weapons science has given the law.

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